

The argument of the Epistle to the Hebrewes, gathered by Des. Erasmus of Roterodame.

Nation resisted the gospel of Christ with more obstinate mindes, then the Jewes, which hate also a special malice agaynst Paule, partly for that, that he openly professed himselfe to be an Apostle of þe heathen, whome the Jewes abozred as vnreligious, and godles: and partly because he seemed to abolishe Moses lawe, which they counted most holy, & desired the same to be published though all the worlde in the steede of the gospel. Insomuche that there were some euen amonge them that had receyued Christes doctrine, which thought that the obseruation of the lawe ought in any wise to be toynd and coupled with the gospel. And herfore the saythfull at Hierusalem, were sondrie wayes vexed and injured by such as resisted the gospel. For the aduersaries beeing comen officers, and hauing the publike auaricie in their handes, the sincere professors of the gospel were caste into prison, were scourged, and suffered spoyle and losse of theyr goodes. Paul therfore comforteth these good men by þe example of the old saintes, which for the moste parte were exercised with such like, or geruouer calamities that their vertue therby might be tried, and made moze excellēt. But chesely he comforteth them with the example of Christe, and hope of the heavenly reward. After this he declareth that now that Christes gospel hath shewed furth his shyning lyght, the shadowes of Moses lawe haue vanished a waie, and continue no longer. And in this place he repeteth many thynges out of the olde testament, and applieth them, vnto Christ. He teacheth further, that we ought not to hope for saluacion by keeping of the lawe, which was geuen but for a tyme, & was superflue, but by fayth, by which those olde notable holy men, whose remembraunce the Jewes had in great veneration, chiefely pleased God. In the ende he teacheth certayne rules pertaining to christian maners.

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¶ The ende of the Argument.

The paraphrase of Erasmus

vypon the Epistle of the Apostle saincte Paule to the hebrewes.

The fyrst Chapter.

The 10th. God (in tyme past) diuersly and many wayes spake vnto the fathers by p^rophetes: but in these laste dayes he hath spoken vnto vs by his owne soun, whome he hath made heire of all thynges: by whome also he made the worlde. Whiche soun, bring the bryghtenes of hys glory, and the very ymage of hys substance, carynge all thynges with the worde of hys power: hath by hys owne persone poured ouer synners, and stretcht out the ryghte hande of the maystry on hys: deying so muche more excellent then the Angels, as he hath by inheritance obtayned a more excellent name then they.



Here as in tymes past almyghtie God, desyring, for the tender loue he bare towarde vs, to prouyde for the health and saluacion of mankynd spake oftentimes diuersly, and many wayes by his p^rophetes, vnto whome he appeared and shewed hym selfe sometimes in a clowde, somtymes in fire, otherwhyles in a soft whistling winde, no we under one likenesse, and no we under an other, somewhyles by Angels, somewhyles by secrete inspiration of mynde: at the length in these laste dayes, because he wold more manifestly declare his charitie towarde vs, and put vs in more assurance, he daryed to speake vnto vs, not by Angell, nor yet by a man p^rphete, but by hys onely soun Iesus Christ, whome he hath by his eternall appoynement and determination made heire and Lorde, not alonely of the Jeweshe nation, but of the whole worlde, as hym that is his true & only soun, who is the Lord of all thynges that are made in heauen & in earth, accordyng as the father promysed before in p^salmes. Whether is it any merueyle if he wold haue the seignory of the whole world comen betwene hys soun and hym, syth that by him he made the same. By worde he made the worlde, and the soun is the eternal worde of the everlastyng father: neither made he the worlde by hys soun, as by an instrument, or seruante, but all thynges were so brought in the creatiō therof, that there was one, & the selfe same power of the father creating it, and the soun. For Iesus Christ is not so the soun of God, as godly men are oftentimes called the chyldren of God, because they obey gods commaundementes, but because he was begottē God of God the father, and so begotten, that he is of the same nature with the father. And where as he was the everlastyng bryghnesse of the fathers glory, as light procedyng from light, and the very ymage and resemblance of hys substance lyke in all portes and equall vnto hym of whome he was begotten: and where he is not alonely the maker of all creatures, but also governeth and turneth aboute all thynges that are made and created with his becke and almyghty commaundement together with almyghty God the father: yet make whither to he abased hym selfe for our cause.

He took vpon him mans nature subiecte to al the iniuries of our wretched state and conditiō: and dying, offered by him selfe a sacrifice for our sinnes in the altar of the crosse: & wheras befoze the pyleit of Moses lawe was woonte to pouurge synnes by the offering of a beasts bloude, he purged the offences of all mankynd by the dying of his owne holy bloude, and by this abasing and humblyng of hymselfe gate so greate glozy, that after he was resurued, and retourned into heauen, he sat on the ryght side of the maiestie of God the father, wherein he was alwayes egall vnto hym as touching his diuine nature. But his maiestie moze plainly appeared vnto the worlde thowoe his humilitie, in somuche that he, who semed befoze moze lowe and absecte then the loweste, is now greater, and so take, not only then the prophetes, but also then the Angels selves: and so much the greater, as the name of a soune hath in it moze dignitie then the name of a seruauit. For this worde angell is a vocable or worde signifying a minstre, and is a name agreyng to an inferioure. Andoubtedly high and great is the dignitie of angels, for that they alwayes assyst the father, and beholde his visage. And amonge them there are some that excell the rest in dignitie.

For vnto which of the Angels saith he at any tyme: Thou art, my sonne, thus haue I begotten the. And againe, I will be his father, and he shall be my sonne. And againe, when he bringeth in the first begotten sonne into the world, he saith: And let al the Angels of God worshippe hym. And vnto the Angels he saith: He maketh his angels spirit: & his ministers a flame of fire. But vnto the sonne he saith: Thy seate (O God) shall be for ever and euer, & he scepter of thy kyngdome is a right scepter. Thou hast leued thyngs which were hated iniquitie. Wherfoze God even the God, hath anoynted thee with the oyle of gladnes about thy selues.

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But vnto what Angell sayd God ever geue so great honour, that he vouchsafed to call hym by the name of his sonne: wheras he speaketh vnto Christe in the mistycall psalme in this wyse: thou art my sonne, I haue begotten thee to day. And againe: I will be his father, he shall be my sonne. For he made angels of nought, but his sonne he begate of his owne proper substance, as he in euery thing is egall vnto hymselfe. Againe when in the mistycall psalme he bringeth his sonne into the worlde, hauing vpon hym the habite of mans body, he speaketh in this maner: And let al the angels of God worshippe hym. True it is that seruantes are honoured, but the sonne (who is egall with the father) is adored & worshipped. But where holy scripture expresseth the dignitie of angels, what saith it? who maketh (saith the scripture) his angels, spirittes, & his ministers a flame of fyre. That angels were created, that haue they comen with o- ther thynges which were likewise created of almighty God. That they were made spirittes and mindes free from the mortallitie & corruption of mans body, & that they alwaies burnyng with godly charitie aske their maker, as quicke and nimble ministers of his godly will, & commaundment, therein undoubtedly they excell vs. But howe much greater are the wordes that he speaketh vnto the sonne: Thy seate, O God, shall be for ever and euer, the sceptre of thy kyngdome is a right scepter. Ye heare how the name of God is geuen vnto the sonne: ye heare howe the seate of a kyngdome, is geuen hym: of a kyngdome, I saye, that neuer shall haue ende.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

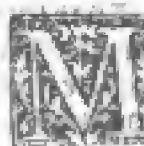
It foloweth in the same psalme. Thou hast loued rightuousnesse, and hated iniquitie, wherfore God, euen thy God, hath enoynted the with the oyle of gladnesse aboue thy felowes. Whereat that he was specially enoynted of God the father aboue all hys felowes, eether men, or angels.

The teste. And thou Lord in the beginning haste layde the foundation of the earth, and the heauens are the workes of thy handes. They shall peryshe, but thou endurest. But they all shall be as doth a garment, & as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art euen the same and thy yeres shall not faile. Unto whiche of the angels sayd he at any tyme: Sitte on my right hande till I make thine enemies thy foete. Are they not all ministering spirites that are sent to minister for theyr takes which shalbe heres of saluation?

And agayne make howe muche auerzitie is geuen the some in an other psalme: and thou Lord (sayth the prophete) in the beginning haste layde the foundations of the earth, and the heauens are the workes of thy handes. They shall peryshe, but thou endurest, and they all shall waxe olde as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them aboue, and they shall suddenly be changed, but thou art euen the same, and thy yeres shall not faile. To what angel were these wordes first spoken, or els this that is redde in an other psalme: Sytte on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy foete. Therefore neither auerzitie to create, neither the maiestie of a kindome, is geue vnto angels, but they all (howe great so eue they be) are spirites appoynted to serue, the which are often tymes sent into the worlde, to assiste suche as shalbe their heritours of euertlasting saluation. Such undoubtedly are the disciples and folowers of Christ.

The. ii. Chapter.

The teste. Wherefore we ought to geue the more euerie heed to the thynges that are spoken vnto vs, lest at any tyme we perishe: for if the wordes which were spoken by angels toke effect: And euery transgression and disobedience receyued a iuste recompence of reward: How shall we escape, if we despayle so greatly of great saluation, whiche at the first beganne to be preached of the word of hym selfe, and was confirmed vnto vs by those by whom that heare it receyue heauenly witness: whether to, both with signes and wonder also, & with greuous miracles, & giftes of the holy ghost, according to his owne will. For vnto the angels hath he not subdued the worlde to come, wherof we speake: but onely in a certayne place ministereth, saying: What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the sonne of man that thou visitest hym? Thou hast made hym a little lower then the angels: thou hast crowned hym with honour and glory, and hast sette hym above the heuens of thy handes. Thou hast putte all thynges in subiection vnder his feete. In that he put all thynges vnder hym, he sette nothing that is aboue put vnder hym. Nevertheless, we see yet al thynges subdued vnto him, but hym that was made lesse then the angels, wile that it was Jesus, which is crowned with glory and honour for the suffering of death, that he by the grace of god, shoulde take of death for all men.



Or that I haue so largely declared the dignitie of oure saviour, is for this intent, that the greater he is, whome the father hath sent into the worlde for our saluation, the more diligently he be we maye geue to such thynges as he hath spoken vnto vs, lest at any tyme we forgette those thynges which the father hath taught and shewed vs by hym. Highest is he that sent hym, and a greater ambassadoure coulde he not send.

hys pleasure was that this shoulde be the last ambassade or legacion: neyther is there any hope of saluation if we despise this and sette it at naught, as our elders and forefathers despised Moses & the prophetes. The greater that the ambassadour is: the greater that the clemencie and gentlenesse of God is towarde vs: the greuouser shall the faulte of oure dysobediente, or els negligence be, excepte we do after hys wordes and teaching. For yf al that God hath hitherto commaunded vnto our elders by hys Prophetes or aungels (who shewed vnto Moses goddes commaundementes be of weight and autozytie: And if those were woorthely punished that dysobeyed suche thynges as were by them commaunded (bycause he semeth to despyse God, who so despyseth hys messengers) howe shall we then escape punishment if we despise and sette at naught, not Moses commaundementes, but so ready saluation, so notable, so euydent, and suche as is frely brought vs, not by Moses, nor yet by aungels or Prophetes (agaynst whome there may be some suspicion of vauitie or lying by one meanes or other ymagyned) but by the sonne of God hym selfe, who spake not vnto vs a farre of out of a cloude, either in a dreame, or by any other waye wherin there myght be any suspicion of decepte or legerdemayne, but was openly heard, seene, handled, and conuersaunte alonge tyme amoung men, declaring by very many and moste euydente argumentes & proofes, that he was the very sonne of God, and offering perfitte saluation vnto al the whole worlde thozowe faith of the gospel. And where as the belefe of this so great a thing beganne first to be taught and preached vnto the worlde by our Lord Iesus Chryst him selfe, who was not alonely the preacher of euertlasting saluation, but also p autoure therof: after ward the same was confirmed of them that were wytnesses of all thynges that he sayde and dyd whyles he was conuersaunte with them: and lest they: preachyng shoulde haue bene of small autozytie and litle regarded, God him self confirmed they: wordes with diuerse signes of miracles and wonders, and other merueylous gyftes, the whiche that heauenly spirite diuersly dystributed vnto hys, as he thought expediente for mannes saluation: by all which thynges it appered very manifestly, that all thys that was done was nothing pattaing to mannes power, but to the vertue and power of God, and that he who firste hym selfe, & afterwarde by his disciples shewed these thynges, was not a man onely, but God couered with the habite of mannes body: And also that he was not an aungel the mistical Psalme playnly declareth, wytnessyng of Chryst on this wise: what is manne that thou art myndfull of hym: or the sonne of manne that thou careste for him: Thou haste humbled him a litle while lower then angels. And streight wayes it foloweth: Thou haste crowned him with glozy & honour, and set him aboue the workes of thy handes. Thou haste putte all thynges in subiection vnder hys feete. &c. Or euer God created the earth, it was then decreed by hys godly determynacion, that whatseuer shoulde be therein, the same shoulde be vnder the obeyssaunce and subiection of Iesu Chryste. It is not read that God gaue the seignory or Lordshippe of all the worlde (in the which aungels are also contrained) to any of the aungels, for he that sayed: All thynges are to be put vnder hym, excepted nothyng that is not to be put in subiection.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

And the prophetic of this psalme is partly fulfilled, and partly to be accomplished in the world to come. For as yet we see not all thynges vnder his subiection. As yet the wicked do rebell, and there is a greate conflict betwene the church and the world. But this we see now fulfilled, that Iesus who when he was here afflicted with diuerse tormentes, and in conclusion suffered the punishment of the crosse, and for mans cause tasted that which by mannes iudgement is moſte bitter and displeasaut, but tasted it in such wyse þ he was not overcome therewith, seemed hereby to be made lower then aungels, who are neyther subiecte to death, nor any greite oz payne: we see (I saye) that Iesus is now crowned with so great gloze and honour, that þ world perceiueth how he being a faule lesse personne, and free from all synne, suffered punishment of death attending to the wyl of God, willing by this means to prouyde for mannes salerie. For his death was not a punishment for any offence by hym committed, but was the mere fauour of God towarde mankind, whom he would of his free beneficence and greate lyberalitye, haue to be redeemed by þ death of his moſte innocent sone Iesus Christ. And as he could not promote vs to the felowshyp of immortalitye unless he were God: so was it not mete that he, who created all thynges, and by whose moderation all thynges were gouerned, should suffer þ wholly to perishe, which he created and made. Where were the sonnes kyndome yf he were alone with the father.

The tenth. For it became him, for whome are all thynges, and by whome are all thynges (after that he had brought many sonnes vnto glory) that he should make the Lord of thynges saluation perfecte through afflictions. For both he that sanctifyeth, and they which are sanctified, are all of one. For which causes sake, he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: I will declare thy name vnto my brethren, in the myddes of the congregation wyl I praise thee. And againe, I will put my trust in hym. And againe, beholde, here am I, and the chyldren whom God hath geuen me.

Therefore it was thought mete & conuenient vnto almighty God the father, that the sonne being the autour and chiefe causer of all mennes saluation, should, after he were tried and proued by many afflictions, not only purchase himselfe the heritage of euerlastyng gloze, but also bring with hym many other chyldren, reconciled vnto the father by his death. And therefore he toke vpon hym mannes body, because that being manne, he might purghe and pouge manne of his offences. For the priest Christ which purgierh, and men that are cleansed and purgied, as touchyng þ nature of man, do yssue of the same firste parent, lyke as they haue one common father in heauen. Wherefore the sonne of God is not ashamed in the psalmes to call godly folke his brethren, when he speaketh thus as followeth: I will declare thy name vnto my brethren, and in the myddes of þ congregation wyl I praise thee. Worth not he here openly cal his disciples brethren: and againe in a certaine other place: I wyl put my trust in him. Nowe it is the parte of a proued childe, to truste his father with all his hart.

Certes lyth the father promysed that he woulde put all thynges vnder hys sonnes fecte, there is no doubt but he wyl saue those also, with whome the sonne reygneth. Agayne in an other place in the Prophete Esaye, the Lorde calleth his disciples his chyldren when he sayeth: I and my chyldren whom god hath geuen me. You heare the wordes or names of kynded.

Forasmuche then as the chyldren are partakers of fleshe and bloude, he also himselfe lyke wylde take parte with them that, the same death he myght expell hym that had overcome death, that is to save the deuyll, and that he myght deliuer them, whiche the same feare of death, were all they. lyke some subiect vnto bondage. For he in no place taketh oithym the angels: but the seede of Abraham taketh he on hym. Wherefore, in all thynges it became hym to bee made lyke vnto his brethren, that he myght bee mercifull and a faythfull hye prieste in thynges concerning God, for to pouge the peoples synnes. For in that he instruct hymselfe to bee tempted, he is able to succour them also that are tempted. The text.

Because therefore these brethren and chyldren to whome he speaketh of, he men whiche consist and haue theyr being of fleshe and bloude, he that of hys owne nature was heauenly, woulde take mans fleshe and bodye vpon hym, and therein bee made lyke vnto those to whome he woulde call vnto the felowshyp of the eternall kynded, that he myght expell hym who hadde the rule and overcome death, that is to save the deuyll, and sette those at libertie, who were alwayes subiect vnto the secutude and bondage of Satan, which the same death reigned ouer all mankynde. For whosoever is in bondage and subiectio of sinne, the same is subiect vnto death. Now Christ neuer gaffe any aungell this honour, that he woulde take hys nature vpon hym, & become his brother, or his kinseman. But accordyng vnto gods promise, he tooke on hym the seide of Abraham. He was borne a Jewe of Jewes, a manne of man, subiecte vnto all the incommodities and euylles of our nature, to thirst, hunger, heate, colde, werines, payne, and death, because thys likenes shoulde testifie the true kynded of nature, and put vs in a sure beleife, that he woulde not forsake those for whome he had suffered so great euylles, & displeasures, and whom he had toynded vnto hym with so straichte a bonde of alvaunce or consanguinite. Wherefore it was conuenient that he shoulde in all poyntes be made lyke vnto those, whome he woulde haue to be his brethren, that he might thereby put them in moze assuraunce to obtayne pardon, in asmuch as he, who tooke vpon hym thosyde of an hye priest or bishop to make intercession vnto god to purge al the peoples synnes, and to reconcile mankynde vnto the father, shoulde seme by this reason, howe he woulde bee mercifull and faythfull to hys, not onely for that he was of the selfe same nature, but also because it chaunced hym to be tryed and pro-

ued with innumerable afflictions of this worlde, to the intent he shoulde appeare the readyer to succour those, whiche shoulde be vexed with the euyls and aduersities of the same.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

The.iii.Chapter.

11c

Therefore holy brethren, partakers of the celestial calling, consider the ambassadour and hys priest of our profession Christ Iesus, how that he is faithfull vnto hym that put him in the office, such as was Moyses in al his house. For looke howe much honoure he (that hath builded a house) hath more then the house it selfe: So much the honoure is he counted worthy of more then Moyses. For euery house is builded of some man. But he that ordeined all thynges is God. And Moyses receiue was faithfull in all hys house, as a minister, to beare witnes of those thynges, whiche were to be spoken afterwarde. But Christe (as a sonne) hath rule ouer the house, whose house are we, yt we holde fast the confidence and the reioysing of that hope, vnto the ende.



Wherefore brethren, now that ye be purified by the bloud of the sonne, & by the free goodnesse of God called to come to be partakers of the lyfe celestiaall, to the intente you maye bee the more answerable vnto his benefites, consider howe excellent in dignitie is Iesus Christ, the ambassadour and bishop of your profession, that is to say, of euangelicall faith, and howe purely and vertuously the same behaued hymselfe to godwarde, of whome he was ordeyned in the whole congregacion, yf welwylle as Moyses was commended for that he acquitted hymselfe as a faithfull minister, in all his synagogue, which is the house and familie of god. But Christe deserued so much the more honoure and dignitie, as the maker of the house oughte more to be honoured then the house it selfe. For euery house is builded of some man. But he that hath ordeyned and made all thynges is god. Therefore Moyses was so conuerfaunt in the house of god, that he was a part or member, and not the author and original causer thereof. And verely this vertuous & godly man Moyses, is woorthie to be of great authority among vs, because he behaued hymselfe faithfully in the same house, but yet as a minister or steward and not as a sonne: he was in an other mannes house, and the other, that is to saye Christ, in his owne. And Moyses brought onely figures & shadowes of those thynges which Christe shoulde afterwarde disclose and open. But Christe as the maker and sonne guided his owne house, whereof we all are members whiche thow we sayth of the gospell, be assembled together vnto hys churche or congregacion: so that we perseuer in that we beganne, that is to wit, if we dooe styl abyde in the concord and agreeaunce of the house, and holde fast and redfastely vnto the ende the faith whiche the spirite of Christ hath geuen vs, and also that glorious hope, by the which as the true natural sonnes of god, and brethren of Christ, we looke for the inheritaunce of heauen. For it shall nothyng anaple vs to haue heard the doctrine of the gospell, excepte we continually liue thereafter: Yea, the greater he is who dayned to speake vnto vs, the greater shall our punishment be.

Wherefore (as the holy ghost saith) to haue yf ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hartes, as in the promysing, in the daye of temptation in the wilderness, whiche tyme saith: The text.
 theye tempted me, prouoked me, and sawe my woordes fourty yere. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and saide: They doe alwaies erre in their hartes, they verely haue not knowen my voyces, so that I swaie in my wrath they shal not enter into my rest. I wote hence by this, lest at any tyme there bee in any of you a frowarde harte subiecte vnto vbeliefe, that he shoulde departe from the liuing god: but exhort ye one another by the baptisme, while it is called to daye: lest any of you were hardenid thowhe the deceitfulness of synne.

Wherefore ye must call vnto your remembraunce, what the holy ghost speaketh in the mistical psalme exhorting the people to obey the voyce or wordes of god, lest he being prouoked dooe grievouslye punish the them, and seclude them from the rest and quietnes promised. To day (sayeth he) if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hartes, as ye did when with your murmuring and rebellion ye prouoked God; what tyme he proued your patience in wilderness: where (sayeth he) your fathers tempted me, as men that woulde proue whether I were he that were hable to punish trespasses of the lawe and offenders, and they felte my wrath, and such as woulde not beleue my wordes, sawe my woordes, and that the space of fouerty yeres. So; so long were they ledde about in wilderness what tyme they flyinge out of Egypte, went vnto the lande wher I promised them quietnes. Wherefore I was not contented with that nation and sayde with my selfe: They doe alwaies erre in theyr hartes folowing theyr owne lustes, neyther haue they knowen my wayes. And for this theyr disobedience I swaie in my wrath it shoulde neuer be, that they shoulde entre into the lande; wherein I promised them rest from the travails of theyr iourneys. Ye haue heard, brethren, God thus exhortyng our fathers that they shoulde not come to the lande promysed them, onlesse they woulde continually obey his commaundementes. And we that thowhe baptisme are deliuered from oure former synnes and offences, are vndoubtedly departed out of Egypte, but yet we shal neuer come vnto the immortallitie promysed vs in heauen, excepte we shal continue in the obseruaunce of fayth and christian charite. If wee looke backe vnto Egypte for; taken, that is, yf we fall agayne to the lustes of oure olde lyfe, we shal bee excluded from the felowshipp and participation of the heavenly lyfe. Wherefore that there bee not in any of you a frowarde harte, and rebelling agaynst the commaundementes of the gospel, or subiecte vnto vbeliefe, in suche wyse that the same returning agayne vnto the vices once forsaken, and the pynce of death the deyll, departe awayne from the liuing god. But rather with dayly exhortacions make ye one an other strong to suffer continually the paynes and travails of this lyfe, whereby God trespeth oure pure and trewe fayth so longe as the tyme is called to daye, that is to saye, so longe as we beate this mortall bodie, and as yet doe trauaill, as pilgrymes and straungers in the wilderness of this worlde, alwaies in leoparde lest any of vs be trespaced with the rustles of this lyfe, bee ledde asyde thowhe the assurance of tyme from the iourneye begonne, lyke as in tymes past the hebrues our forefathers beeing weyry of theyr long traailing lodged after the labour of the dayes whiche they lefte behynde them in Egypte.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

The text.

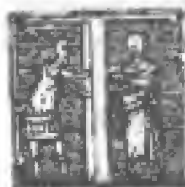
¶ We are made partakers of Christ, if we kepe sure (vnto the ende) the beginning of the substance, so long as it is sayd: to day if ye will heare his voyce, haue not your hartes as in the prouoking, for some tyme they herde his prouoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moyses. But with whome was he displeased fourtie yeres: Was he not displeased with them that had sinned, whose carcases were ouerthrowen in the desert: To whomswore he that they should not enter into his rest, but vnto them that were not obedient: And we see that they coulde not enter in, because of vnbelyfe.

Certeynly we are grafted in Christe by baptisme and the profession of faith, but in such wise, that we may thorow our owne default fall from him againe: neyther shall we otherwise come vnto the enheritaunce of mortallitie promised vs, excepte we kepe sure, and constauntely vnto the ende the beginning and foundation of that felicitie, whiche was layed in vs by the gospell, still going forwarde in that was begonne, monyfyed thereto by thys saying whiche is continually spoken vnto vs: To day if ye will heare his voyce haue not your hartes, as in the prouoking. For some when they hearde the Lordes voyce, did then by dysobeying the same moue hym, prouoking hym wrathe, and indignation agaynst them. Howbeit al dyd not so whiche came out of Egypt vnder the conduction of Moyses. And vnto these that were not disobediente it was geuen to come vnto the lande flowing with milke and hony: With whome was he displeased fourtie yeres: Was it not with them that had offended: howbeit these entred not into rest, but their carcases were ouerthrowen in wilderness: with whome elles was he so muche displeased that he swore they should neuer entre into the rest promised them, but with those whiche obeyed not the voyce of god: we see then that god was on both sydes trewe, who bothe perfourmed to the obedient what he promised the, and to the disobedient that he manaced them with all. The obedient came thereunto by their patience: the other coulde not entre in because of theyr vnbelyfe and incredulitie.

The xliii. Chapter.

The text.

Let vs feare therefore, lest any of you, forsakynge the promise of enterynge into his rest, should come at any tyme to haue been disappointed. For vnto vs is it declared, as wel as vnto them. But it profited not them, that they heard the voyce, because that whiche heard it, coupled it not with feare. For we which haue beleeued, doe enter vnto his rest, as he said: Quen as I haue sworn in my wrath, they shall not entre into my rest. And that spake he dreely longe after the woordes were made, and the foundation of the world layde. For he spake in a certayne place of the seuenthy daye on this wise: and god had rest the seuenthy daye from all his workes. And in this place, agayne: I haue said: not come vnto my rest.



That Moyses was vnto our fathers and elders, the same is Christe now vnto vs. And it was a worldly rest whereunto they hastened. We goe vnto the rest celestiall. Lette vs therefore feare to despise the voyce of God who dayly speaketh vnto vs by the gospell, leste lyke as many of them were through their owne default disappointed of the hope and expectation

expectation of the rest promised, so may it chaunce that some of vs also seme to haue bene disappointed, and not to haue attained thende of hys tourney. For vnto vs is shewed a muche moze blisful rest, and that by a moze certayn and faithfull ambassadour, then vnto them. But it auayled them nothing that thei receiued the promise of rest, and hitherto heard the voice of the lord, because thei beleued not the same after thei had heard it. For we which haue geuen credence vnto the lordes voyce, doe enter into the true rest that shalbe free from the inquiete busines and troubles of worldly euils, as on the contrary parte, he denieth that they shal enter in, who haue not beleued, saying: As I haue sware in my wrath, they shal not entre into my rest, whereas neuertheles the first rest of god had already bene many yeres before, even then; when at the creation of the world, his woorkes were perfectly finished: and in a memoriall hereof, the Jewes dooe celebrate their resting daie. For scripture speaking of the firste reste whiche chaunced on the seuenth daie after the creation of the world, sayth: And the lord rested on the seuenth day from al his woorkes. And againe in this place that I alleaged out of the psalme, he made mention of the seconde reste whiche refresheth the Hebrewes with the hardiwork of the lande of Palestine, after they were wearied with long trauail and iourneying, saying: they shal not entre into my rest.

Seeing therefore it foloweth, that some must enter therinto, and there to whome it was first preached, entered not in time: for vnbefelers sake, he appointeth a certayn daie after so long a tyme, saying in Psalme: as it is rehearsed, this day if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hartes. For if y^e had geuen them rest, then woulde he not affect to be haue spoken of an other day. I here remyneth therefore yet a reste, to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, hath ceased also from hys owne woorkes, as God byd from hys.

The text.

With therefore it foloweth of these authorities, that God first entered in to his reste after he had made the world, and fewe entered into the seconde reste for they: vnbefelers sake: and considering also that the promise shal yet be as voyde excepte some entre therein, soasmuche as our forefathers are excluded therefore, vnto whome reste was promised by figures and shadowes of the lawe, the which reste thesame yet, vnto whome it was promysed, neuer entered in: there is againe in the mystical psalme an other day appointed by the mouth of Dauid, after so many yeres that the lande of Palestine was possessed, the which day the sayed prophete calleth not the seuenth day, but this daie, as it hath bene now oftentimes rehearsed before. This daie if ye will heare hys voyce, harden not your hartes. For yf that Iesus the sonne of Dauid, (who beeing capitayne certayne of them entered into Palestine) had geuen rest to reste vnto the Israelites, God woulde not afterwarde haue made mention of an other day by the mouth of Dauid, els might they haue sayd: what newe reste speakest thou of vnto vs, since we already enioy the reste promised reynyng in the lande of Jewrye. Therefore there remaineth a certayne other resting daie vnto the people of God: there remaineth an other reste, not in Palestine, but in the countrey celestiall, whither to we haue Iesu Christe beeing our captayne: but yet it shall neuer chaunce vs to attayne thesame, excepte we haue kepte here purely withoute violacion, the
restyng

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

resting day of the gospel, abstayning from all the woozkes of this worlde. For whosoener hath entred into this true rest of God, hath nowe likewise rested from his woozkes, as God rested from hys, after he had created and made the worlde. For he is brought into that life, where there is no busynesse, neyther of labours, nor of griefes or paynes.

The text. Let vs study therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man faile after the same example of vncleise. For the worde of god is quicke and mighty in operation, and sharper then any two edged swerde: and entereth through, euen vnto the diuiding a furbet of the iouele the spirite, and of the ioyntes, and the marie. And is a discecter of the thoughtes, and of the intencs of the herte: neither is there any creature that is not manifest in the sight of him. But all thinges are naked and open vnto the eyes of him, of whom we speake.

Therefore whyles we as yet traual as straungers in the wilderness of this lyfe, let vs not stande still, let vs not looke backe, but with continuall endeuor, and seruent desire, hasten to that true rest, whereunto our Capityne Iesus calleth vs, and let it not be long of vs that any of vs fall by the waye as our fozefathers dyd. For we shall haue no lesse punishmente then they had, if we doe likewise offende. Neyther is that punishment like to be regarded or passed on, that Christ Iesu the worde of god, threatneth with. For he is quicke and strong in operation, and sharper then any two edged swerde, not onelye cuttyng the membyres of the bodye, but also the mooste inward affections of the mynde: insomuch that he cutteth a soondye the soule from the spirite, and disseuereth the ioyntes, and the marie, beeyng a discecter of the secrete thoughtes and ententes of our harte: and so trewe is it that no parte of mans thought is vnknoen vnto him, that there is no creature at all neyther in heauen, nor vnder the yearth, whiche is not manifeste vnto his sight, but al thynges are naked and open to the eyes of hym, vnto whō we muste geue an accomptes of our lyfe. As in times past the mourmyng of the Hebryes was not vnknoen vnto god, and as there neded no swerde to destrope them, but his onelye commaundemente: so shall not that man be vnknoen vnto Christ, who after he hath once professed a christian lyfe, priuelye soueth worldly thinges, and doth not with pure minde and affection hasten vnto the reste promysed.

The text. Seeyng then, that we haue a greate hye priest which is entred into heauen (euen Iesus the sonne of god) let vs holde the profession of our hope. For we haue not an hye priest which cannot haue compassion on our infirmities, but wns in all pointes, tempted, like as we are: but yet without synne. Let vs therefore go boldly vnto the seate of grace, that we maye obtayne mercie, and finde grace to helpe in tyme of nede.

Seeyng then we haue an hye priest who is verely great, Iesus Christ the sonne of god, whiche after the sacrifice made for our reconciliation entered not into the mooste secrete parte of the temple made with handes, but into heauen, to make the father mercifull vnto vs: Let vs abide stil in our professio folowing the way that he hath shewed vs, and hastening to those thynges whiche he hath promysed. Let not his greatnesse feare vs, but his mercye rather encourage vs. Trueth it is that he dwelleth in heauen, but he was before a man conuersant in earth. Let vs not therefore ymagyne that we haue an hye priest which cannot take compassion on our infirmite.

He was

He was tempted with all kinde of euils the which our lyfe ys combred with all, howbeit he returned agayne into heauen a conquerour, to reuente & we trustyng on his ayde, shoulde not be worried or overcome with afflictions, but couragiously goe thowt we vnto the reste of euerlastyng felicitie the which he came vnto. For he was for no other cause afflicted, beaten, spytte vpon, and crucified as an harmfull person, where he was innocent and gyltlesse, but onely to pouрге vs (who are in very dede hurtfull caytifes, and sinners) from al oure synnes and iniquities. He hath not chaunged his affection towarde vs, so that we touch hym not awaie from vs by oure owne vicious behauioure and frowardnesse. Therfore trustyng on his mercy, let vs goe vnto his seate, not his terrible, but appeasable seate, which is ready to helpe, and not to destroye vs: let vs come boldly putting no doubt to obtaine mercy at his handes, whereby oure synnes may be pardoned, and grace also geuen, that maye furrewe vs with heauently gyfes, and helpe vs so ofte as we shall require. For we must desire no aydes but of hym onely, of whome we trust to haue our rewarde.

The. v. Chapter.

For every hie piete that is taken from amonge men is ordained for men, in thinges pertaining to God, to offer giftes and sacrifices for sinne: which can haue compassion on the ignorant, and on them that erre out of the waye, for asmuch as he hym selfe also is compassed with infirmitie. And for the same infirmities sake, he is bounde to offer for sinnes, as well for hym selfe, as for the people. And no man taketh honoure vnto hym selfe: but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

The text.



Althermore it is an vsage amonge the Jewes that every hie priest chosen from amonge men, be ordained for this purpose, & in such businesse as chaunce betwene God and man, he as a mediator betwene both, maye make intercession for manne, in such wise that if God be any thyng displeased with mennes offences, he may appease his wrath by giftes and sacrifices due: the which hie priest for the dignities sake of hie priesthoode, can in such wise be muche with God, that he is not yet free from mannes infirmitie, to theent he maye be the readyer to take compassion on them, who haue sinned thowt we erre and ignorance, in asmuche as he hym selfe is subiecte vnto the same infirmitie, in that he is of the selfe same nature that they be of. For such are sooner sorry for other mennes euils and displeasures, as haue their selues learned mercy and compassion by the tastyng of lyke euils & aduersities: and he is gladder to be remedied of other mennes errors and offences, which falleth oftentymes hym selfe, or at the least wyse is in leoparchie to fall: And for this cause Moses priest ought as well to offer sacrifice for his owne synnes, as he offereth for the peoples offences.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Nowe Christ had so a commune nature with vs subiecte vnto paynes and death, that he was notwithstanding with out all manour of synne. He had experience of payne who neuer knewe any synne. Furthermore, accordyng to the ordinaunces of Moses lawe, no man taketh vpon him and vsurpeth the honourable ministracion of hys priesthod of hys owne accorde, but he onely taketh it in hande that is called thereunto by goddes commaundement, lykewyse as Aaron was called. For he semeth vntoworthy of honour, whoso by reason of ignorance ambitiously desireth dignitie: and that man is not meete for a rowme of ministracion, whych intrudeth hym selfe into the same

The text.

Such so Christ also glorified not him selfe, to be made the hys priest: but he that saide vnto hym, thou art my sonne, thys daye haue I begotten the, glorified hym. As he saith also in another place: Thou art a priest for euer after the order of Melchisedech. Whiche in the baptes of his fether, when he had offered up praies & supplications, with strong crying and teares (vnto him that was able to saue him from death) and was heard because of his reuerence, thought he were the sonne of God, yet learned he obedience, by those thynges, whiche he suffered: and he being perfect, was the cause of eternall saluacion vnto all them that obeyed hym: and is called of God an hys priest, after the order of Melchisedech.

And herein also Christ gaue vs an ensample of a lawfull bishop. For he toke not vpon him of his owne accorde, the glorious dignitie of an hys priest, but was allowed of hys father, who firste acknowledged Iesus to be hys true sonne, when he saied: Thou art my sonne, thys daye haue I begotten the. And also he ordeineth him anon after a true and lawfull hys priest when he saith: Thou art a priest for euer after the orde of Melchisedech. Ye haue hearde howe he was ordeined. Nowe hearken howe he was tempted, and proued. When as yet he had a mortall body in earth, he offered prayres and supplications vnto god the father, who could haue preserved him from the punishment of the crosse, excepte he had bene more desirous to prouide for mannes safetie by the death of hys sonne. He offered them with feruent affection, greate crying, and plentifull teares, and was heard by reason of hys charitie and louetapne dignitie with the father. He obeyed hys desyre. For hys wyll and desyre was not to escape the punishment of the crosse, but to procure vs soule health by hys death. He felte greate feare, he felte the torment & angurthe of death, but the loue that he bare towards mankynde preuailed. He was the sonne, and coulde haue obtayned any thyng of the father if he had desired it: but thus was it thought to be more conuenient for our health, that he being afflicted with all manour of euils and aduersities, shoulde geue vnto his a rule of perfecte obedience euen to the punishment of the crosse. Do ye aske what auayled thys patience of oure priest? He was so proued and tryed euery waye, that nothyng shoulde bee lackyng in hym: he saued not onely hymselfe, but was the cause of saluacio to all that folowe thys ensample of obedience. For he obtayned of the father that all those whiche woulde be hys felowes in sufferynge afflictions, shoulde also be partakers with hym of hys kyngdome.

And for this sacrifice duly made, he was called of the father an hye prieste after the orde of Melchiselech.

Wherefore we would speake many thynges, but they are manye he desired: beinge yett full of heyringe. For when as concerning the tyme, ye ought to be teachers, yett haue ye made agayne that we teachen you the firste principles of the myste of god: and are become suche as haue neede of mylke: and not of strong meate. For euery man that is fed with mylke, is imperfect in the worde of righteuousnes, for he is but a babe. But strong meate belongeth to them that are perfect: such as those, which by reason of life haue theyr iudges exercised to discerne both good and euill.

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Nowe who was this Melchiselech, and howe conueniently he figured the sonne of God, I would largely entreate, but it shalbe very harde for me to declare all thynges vnto you, because your eares are not recepuable of this matter, but to weake to awake with a sermon of suche length and difficultie. And herein I am constrained to requyre in you more diligence and fervent desyre to goe forward, who notwithstanding you haue so manye yeres professed Chyriste, that for the quantitie and space of tyme ye should be teachers of other men, yett haue you neede to be taught of me agayne the first principles, and as a man would saye, the. I. V. C. of holy scripture, the whiche is wente to be taught vnto those, as vnto children, whoe the same baptisme are borne agayne vnto the gospel: and you, whome it becometh nowe to be strong and stablished in euangelicall philosophie, haue neede as yett to be babes to be fed with the mylke of lowest doctrine: rather then be meete to receyue the strong meate of higher learning. As person continewe still, and as one would saye, crepe in the hystorie of holy scripture, and ryle not vp to the more hynde and mysticall understanding thereof. Nowe he that is such a one that he hath neede as yett to be nourished with mylke, is ignorant, and not strong enough to heare the righteuousnesse of the gospel, whiche is not founde in thystorie, but in allegories. And therefore he is not recepuable of that preaching, whereby we are taught perfitt righteuousnesse, because he is as yett a babe in Chyrist, lately graffed in his body, in such wise that he may by litle a litle aspire to greater thynges.

Furthermore the strong meate of more profounde & mysticall understanding, pertayneth to those whiche are grown, and become perfect, euen to those, who by long and continuall practise haue theyr mytte exercised to discerne both good and euill. He that is a chyldre and nourished with mylke, is yett verely, but yett he hath not gotten hymselfe that strength by custome and age, whereby he is able to choose out for himselfe of euery thyng the best, and loketh not to haue an other to put mylke, or chyldres meate chawed before into his mouth.

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The parapiase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

The. vi. Chapter.

The terte. Therefore leaving the doctrine that pertaineth to the beginning of christen men, let vs go forth vnto perfection, not laying againe the foundation of repentance from dead workes and of faith toward God, of baptizing, of doctrine, and of laying on of handes, and of resurrection from death, and of eternall iudgemente. And so will we doe, if God permitte. For it cannot be that they which were once lighted, and haue tasted of the heavenly gift, and were become partakers of the holy ghost, and haue tasted of the good worde of God, and of the power of the world to come, if they fall away (and as concerning them schuler certifie the scenn of God a traile, and make a mocke of him) that they should be counted againe by repentance



herfoze let vs, who ought nowe to haue ceased to be any longer children in chustian Philosophie, omitting the procelle, wherewith the ignorant are wonte to be taught their first pynccples, go forth vnto perfection, and not euer to stande styll aboute the often laying of the foundation of repentance, for the first degre vnto chustendome is, to be repentaunte for our former lyfe, and so forsake sinne. Next of all it is requyred, that we be taught that true innocencie a soule helth is to be hoped for of God: then forthwith that we be pouged by holy baptisme from the filthynesse of oure synnes, and restored agayne vnto the state of innocencie: then that we receiue the holy gost by laying on of handes, and beleue the resurrection of the dead, to come, and also that last iudgement, which shal awarde some to eternall felicitie, and other some to euerclastyng paynes, and damnacion. It is enoughe so; vs to haue once learned, once professed, and once beleued, these thynges. It shoulde be a thyng dysagreable to all reason, if that after, we haue been taught these forsaide pynccples, we so behaue our selves hereafter, that it be needefull to haue the same often tymes repeted and taught vs agayne, the which are taught so; this purpose, that they shoulde be the foundation of the edifice whiche is to be buylded there on, But after we haue learned suche pynccples, it shalbe our parettes to do our diligente en- deuoyr that we may by daily encrease of vertue a godlinesse, become great and perseite, a that the noble building of golde, silver, and precious stones, of vertues and godly workes maye ryle, and be teted vp from the foundation once layed euen to the hyghest toppe. It is our duettie to employe our diligence to this ende, that we maye synisse the thyng we go aboute, if God be fauorable vnto our attemptes, without whose apde mannes en- deuoyr is able to bypnyng, nothing to effecte. After that we haue once begun this course or trade of lyfe, we ought not to turne our backes, nor to make resistance, not to retorne vnto the thynges once forsaken, but still to goe forwarde to greater thynges and of higher perfection. It were the greatest fo- lye that myght be, for a manne to haue recourse vnto that thyng, whiche neyther ought, ne can be repeted and ministered agayne.

For it is not possible for them whych haue once forsaken the darthenesse of theyr former life, lyghened by the doctrine of the gospell, and now hauing theyr synnes forgiven thowhe baptysme haue felt the free beneficence and greate liberalitie of God, and the gyfte of heauen, wherby he releaseth at once all our synnes, and geueth vs grace to lyue well: and afterwarde by laying on of the priestes hand haue bene made partakers of the holy ghost, by whome they haue begonne to beleue the blessed promises of euerlastyng lyfe, and now (as it were) to take a sate & soyetaste of the power of þe wo:ld. To come it is not possible, I sate, for them, if they fall agayne thowhe negligence into there former abominable lyfe, to be renued by repentaunce, the which thing hath once bene done already in baptysme, where as the olde manne is once cast away with his debes, and a newe creature cometh out of the bathe o: water. so: suche as requyre to be renued agayne thowhe repentaunce, after they haue often tymes fallen agayne vnto theyr former sinfull lyfynge, what goe they els aboute, but, as concernyng them selves, to crucifie the sonne of God a freche, and make, as it were, a iestyng stocke o: mocke of hym: He hath once died for vs, and we haue once dyed with hym in baptysme. He hath once rysen agayne, and wyll neuer dye any moze. In semblable wyse muste we so rise agayne with him in a newe lyfe, that we fall not elsowes into the deab lyfe once forsaken, and by that meanes prouoke God so much the moze vnto wyath & indignaciō, as he hath the moze bountuously shewed hys lyberalitie vpon vs. Our industrie and diligence ought to be answerable vnto hys liberalitie, and bounteous goodnes towarde vs. He hath put in vs certayne seedes of vertue and goodnesse, and therfore we also must do our diligence, that the same may growe and come to good.

For the earth whiche diueth in the rayne that cometh oft vpon it, and bringeth forth herbes meete for them that drinke it, receaueth blessing of God. But that grounde which beareth thornes & briars, is reposed, and is nye vnto cursing: whose ende is to be burned. Nevertheless (deare frendes) we must so be better of you, and thynges which accompany saluation, though we thus speake. For God is not vngyfteous that he shoulde forget your toyls and laboure that ploreth of loue: which loue ye shewe in hys name, which haue ministered vnto the sayntes, and yet my self. Yea, and we desyre that euery one of you shewe the same diligence to the full aduancing of hope, euen vnto the ende: that ye saynt nor, but be folowers of them which thowhe fedyth and patience receiue the encrease of the promyse.

For the earth which hath dyonken in the rayne that falleth oft vpon it, & hath brought forth herbes profitable to them that tyll it, is praysed of God for that it is not barayne, nor kepeth doune and stranglet the seede, whych is therein sowed, without any frute o: profyte. But that grounde whych after good seed receiued hath brought forth thornes and thyssles, is yuell, and nye vnto goddes cursing, whose ende is not to be mowed downe, but to be burned. And these thynges speake I (dearly beloved) only to exhoite you, & not because the wordes I haue spoken of a barren earth may well be applied to you. I sate rather I haue conceived a better oppynion of you then so, wherby I am ascertayned, that by goddes helpe you shall attayne saluation, rather then be damned, albeit this similitude vled I because to speke vnto

The parayse of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

In you the desire of godly a chryſtian lyuing, leſt you waring ſainte againe, come by litle and litle to vtter conſuſion. God wyll helpe you if you do your endeuorie to attayne better thynges. For he is not vnkynde, nor vnrighteous in ſuche wyſe that he wyll forget your good dedes, & the labour ye haue ſuſtained, not for renowme, or vauntage ſake, but for the loue of his name, the which loue ye haue ſhewed by dede ſelſe, who both hertofore haue miniſtered of your goodes & benefites vnto the ſainctes (by whom Chriſtes name is preached) and yet do miniſter at thys preſent. Furthermore I haue ſpoke theſe wordes becauſe I am deſyrous that ye all (among whome there are many the which are ſainter then I woulde they ſhoulde be) perſeuer in your dopnges, and not onely that, but alſo dayly profite moze and moze tyll ye come to perfeccion, that wher as I haue nowe a good hope of you, I may haue a ſure confidence and belefe, percepuing you ſtill to go forwarde, and to be nothing nye the daunger that ſuch are in, as thoſe who a ſlowthful ſaintneſſe fall agayne by litle and litle to theyr olde lyfe, but rather to folowe the ſteppes of thoſe, who beleuing Chriſtes promyſes, and hauing ſure hope of heauenly rewardes attayne the inheritaunce of the lyfe immortall, which God hath promiſed vnto hys in p kyngdome of heauen. Suche as dyſtruſting goddes promyſes looked backe vnto Egypte forſaken, neuer came vnto the lande of becheſt, but Abraham, who agaynſt all naturall reaſon conſtantly beleued goddes promyſes, obtayned that he taried for.

The text.

For when God made promeſſe to Abraham, becauſe he had none greater to ſwore by, he ſware by hym ſelſe, ſaying: Surely, I wyll bleſſe the, and multiply thee in dede. And ſo after that he had taried patiently, he choſe the promyſes. For men verily ſwears by him that is greater then them ſelues, and an othe to conſirme the thyng, is to them an ende of all ſtife. So God wylling beey aboundantly to ſhewe vnto the heyes of promeſſe, the ſtableneſſe of hys counſell added an othe: that by two immutable thynges (in which it was impoſſible that God ſhoulde lye) we myghte haue a ſtrong conſolation, whiche by therto haue fled, for to holde faſt the hope that is ſette befor vs, which hope we holde as an ancre of the ſoule both ſure and ſteady, which hope alſo cheerech in into thoſe thynges which are wyth in the bayle, where the ſortunners is for vs entred, euen Jeſus that is made an hys pyer for euer, after the order of Melchizedek.

For God, to thentent hys promyſe ſhoulde be the better beleued, ſware an othe the which amonge menne is wonte to be compted the ſureſt gage that canne be. He ſware by hym ſelſe, becauſe he had none greater then himſelſe to ſwore by: He ſware in thys wyſe: I ſwears by my ſelſe, becauſe thou dydeſt thys thyng, and ſparedſt not thy onely begotten ſonne (Iſaac) for my ſake, I will bleſſe the, and multiplye thy ſeede as the ſtarrs of heauen, and the ſande that is in the ſea ſhoze. Therefore after he hadde perceiued the conſtancie of thys olde manne, who ſticked not to ſley, euen hys owne ſonne in whome ſemed to be al the hope of his of ſpyng and poſteritie, he confirmed that thyng by an othe which he promiſed befor. For he hauing to do with man, condeſcended to the falſhions & manours of man. When to aggrauate theyr othe do ſwore by hym that is greater. And if they haue any doubte or controuerſie amonge the ſelſes, the ſame is diſcuſſed & ended by the confirmation of an othe. And for this cauſe when God woulde notably declare the ſtableneſſe of hys counſell, vnto the heyes of promyſe, he added an othe,

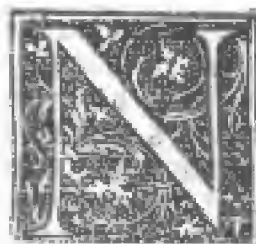
leſſe

lesse any man myght suppose that he woulde lye, who had bounde hymselfe wyth two bandes, fyrst by promyse, and then by an othe: and to content also that we beeryng stablished in a sure belefe myght haue a strong consolacion in the aduersities of thys woylde we, I saye, that haue not sette out felicitie in the pleasures of thys presente lyfe, but haue fled hitherto to obteyne the hope that is sette befoze vs in the woylde to come, the which hope we holde fast in the meane tyme in the stormes of this woylde as a stedfaste and sure ancre of the soule, not fastened in transitorye thynges, but in heauen, so; that it stretcheth it selfe euen to those thynges that are wythin the vayne whereas no mutation is, but all thynges are stable and euertlasting. Thys is that inwarde parte of the temple, into the which Iesus Christe, runnyng thither befoze vs, and shewing vs the way, hath entred, to make intercession fo; vs vnto the father: who is made an hve pyest fo; ever after the orde, as I sayde in the begynnyng, of Melchisedech.

The vii. Chapter.

The text.

In this Melchisedech kyng of Salem (which beynge piete of the most hve God, met Abraham, as he returned agayne from the slaughter of the kinges and blessed hym: to whome also Abraham gaue tythes of all thynges) he is called by interpretation kyng of righteousness: after that, kyng of Salem (that is to saye kyng of peace) withoute father, without mother, without tyme, and hath neither begynnyng of daies, neyther yet ende of lyfe: but is likened vnto the sonne of God; and continueth a priest fo; euer.



Nowe I see the proceſſe of our wordes hath broughte vs agayne to the mention of Melchisedech, lette vs consider what a man he was, & by what reason he bare the ſygure of our pteſte. For wee reade that this Melchisedech kyng of the Citie called Salem, was an hve pteſte of the moſt hve God, the whiche Melchisedech mette Abraham in hys retourne from the ſlaughter of the thre kynges, and blessed hym fo; his valtaunte acte, vnto whome Abraham alſo gaue tythes of all hys goodes. fyrſte Melchisedech by verie interpretation of name, is called the kyng of ryghteouſneſſe: then by the tyle of his kyngdome, he is called kyng of Salem, that is to ſaye, kyng of peace: who, as it is ſaid, had neyther father, no; mother, no; pedigree, no; begynnyng of daies, no; end of lyfe. But of hym it is ſpoken (whiche verely agreeth wyth the ſonne of god) that he continueth a pteſte fo; euer. And ſo farfoorth euery thyng agreeth verely well wyth our hve pteſte Chriſt, who ordained the kyngdome of ryghteouſneſſe, who is the pynce of peace, who, as touchyng his bette had neither father in earth, no; mother, whole pedigree no manne is hable to declare, who had neyther begynnyng, no; ſhal haue ending, whole pteſthood continueth fo; euer, and putteth all that beleue in hym vnto the woylde ende. Nowe let vs conſider the dignitie of theſame Melchisedech and howe farre he excelled the pteſtes of Moſes lawe. Abraham ſo greate a patriarche dyd not onley vouchſafe to receyue bleſſyng of hym after he had ſeene the kynges, but alſo gaue hym tythes of the ſpoiles.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

The tenth.

Consider what a man this was, vnto whome also the patriarche Abraham gaue tithes of the spoyles. And herebye those children of Leui, whiche receyue the office of the priestes, haue a commaundement to take (according to the lawe) tithes of the people, that is to saye, of thei brethren, yea though they sprong out of the loynes of Abraham. But he whose church is not counted among them, receiued tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And no man denyeth, but that he whiche is lesse receyueth blessing of hym whiche is greater. And here men that bye, receiue tithes. But there he receyueth tithes, of whom it is written, that he liueth. And to say the truth, Leui himselfe also, which vseth to receiue tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the wombe of hys father, when Melchisedech mette Abraham.

And the lawe of Moyses commaunded this, that they whiche came of the linage of Leui, shoulde succede in the ministracion of priesthoode, and receiue tithes, but of thei brethren alonely, that is to saye, of the posteritie of Abraham: neither doeth the auctoritie and dignitie of the Leuites streich any further: but Melchisedech where he was an alphant from the Iewische nation, receyued tithes of Abraham, the very auctour of the whole nation and blessed him, of whome according vnto Gods promise, the nation of the Iewes shoulde issue. It is out of contouersie that the lesse receiue blessing of the greater. For whoso bleisseth, doeth as it were, allowe by hys auctoritie that whiche is done. Nowe thauctoritie to allowe is wont to remayne in the superiour, and not in him that is equall or inferioure. And in the tribe of Leui they receiued tithes, who were also mortall menne themselves, and by whose death the same auctoritie came vnto other. But it is sayde of Melchisedech that he liueth and continueth for ever in the preeminence of perpetual priesthoode. To conclude, whereas thauctoritie to demaund tithes came from leui the chiefe priest vnto other priestes, yet in that that Abraham payed tithes to Melchisedech, it semeth that Leui also himselfe was made bonde to paye tithes, notwithstanding that he was wonte to receyue the same of other. Therefore as they are counted of lesse auctoritie that paye tithes vnto Leui: so was Leui inferioure vnto Melchisedech vnto whome he gaue tithes. Some man wyll here saye: howe gaue he tithes who was not yet borne at what tyme Melchisedech mette Abraham? But forasmuche as the posteritie is in manoure counted to bee in the auctoure of the nation, therfore I sayed after this intellection, that Leui, who came of Abraham, gaue tithes vnto Melchisedech.

The tenth.

I knowe therefore perfection came by the priesthoode of the leuites: for vnder that priesthoode, the people receyued the lawe: what needed it further more, that an other priest shoulde eue so be called a priest the order of Melchisedech, and not after the order of Aaron? For yf the priesthoode bee translated, then of necessity must the lawe be translated also. For he of whome these thinges are spoken, pertaineth vnto an other reibe, of whom no man hath at the vantage. For it is euident that our Lord sprong of the tribe of Iuda, of which reibe spake Moyses nothing concerning priesthoode. And it is yet a more euident thing, if affect the similitude of Melchisedech, there arise an other priest, which is not made after the same of the carnall commaundemente, but after the power of the endles life. (For after this maner word he testifieth thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech.) When the commaundemente that was afore, is disannulled, because of weaknes and unprofitablenesse.

Yf so be that perfect religion and holinesse shoulde depende vpon the Leuiticall priesthoode, as it semeth vnto the Iewes, because the lawe was geue vnder Aaron who was of the tribe of Leui, what needed then agayne an other priest to rise, who, as it is written in þ mystical psalme, should be said to bee

be instituted not after the orde of Aaron, but after the orde of Melchisedech: for seeing the auctoritie and fourme of the lawe is toynd with the fourme of priesthood, it is nedefull if priesthood be translated into an other fourme, that the fourme of the lawe bee lykewyse translated and chaunged. Certes the chaunging of the tribe sufficiently declareth, that the manour or fourme of priesthood must nedes be chaunged. For he whome the prophete of the psalme speaketh of, was none of the tribe of Leui, but of that tribe wherof neuer man as yet setued at the aulter, because it is eydent that our lord Iesus sprong of the trybe of Iuda. But when Moses did institute the rite, and auctoritie of priesthood, he made no mention of this priesthoode whiche shoulde bee of the same kyndred with the tribe of Iuda. Furthermore that the priesthood wherof the psalme speaketh is not the same manoure of priesthood that Moses priesthood is of, it doeth appere more manifestly in that the prophete playnely addeth these wordes folowing: After the orde of Melchisedech: signifying thereby a priest vnto Aaron, and like to Melchisedech, so thentente we shoulde vnderstande, that there is no lesse difference betwene the one persone and the other, then is betwene the rite or ceremonie, and efficacy of priesthood. What meaneth this: after the orde of Melchisedech: nothing els, but which doeth not sacrifice beastes: priestred by the grosse and carnall lawe, but can by heauenlye grace bring vs to lyfe euerlasting. For the law did purifie the fleshe by washinges, and diuers purgacions: but grace purifieth our soules with a sacrifice of more strength, and efficacy. For as Aaron continueth not for euer, so his priesthood was not euerlasting, and as it is sayde of Melchisedech, that he continueth for euer, so his priesthoode shall haue no ende. And that these thynges verely agreeeth with Christ, the mystical psalme declareth, saying: Thou art a priest for euer after the orde of Melchisedech. The priesthood that continueth, but for a season geueth place to the euerlasting priesthood, and the mortall hys prieste geueth place vnto the immortall. Certes as the vaperfiter priesthood geueth place vnto the perfiter: euen so the vaperfit lawe geueth place to the perfiter lawe of the gospell, wherby the constitutions and lawes of Moses conteyned in the olde testament be (as it were,) dissanulled, for that they were not of strength sufficiente, nor so profitable as they shoulde haue been.

For the lawe brought nothing to perfection, but was an introduction to a better hope, by the which we drawe nys vnto god. And therefore is it a better hope, because the hope was not done without an othe. For those priestes were made without an othe, but this priest with an othe, by him that sayd vnto him. The Lord saith, and will not repent. Thou art a priest for euer after the orde of Melchisedech: And for that cause was Iesus a sacrifice of a better testament.

For god woulde vs to be made perfite, but that lawe broughte nothing to perfection: neyther was it geuen for that purpose, yet was it not geuen in bayne: Truely it was geuen for a season, so thentente it shoulde be a certaine griece or staye to bring vs at the length to a better hope. For it promysed a fructfull lande wherein they shoulde lyue a quiet lyfe, who had kepte the commaundementes of Moses lawe,

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

The law was grosse, and so was the reward, but thus god prouided for the grosse capacities of manne, that by sensible thinges they shoulde by litle and litle fall in vye with thinges spiritual. It was commaunded that they shoulde not slep, that they shoulde not steale, that they shoulde pourge the handeling of carayne with certayne ceremonies: A laude was promised them wherein they shoulde liue quietly a few yeres: but vnto vs heauen is promised, where we may liue in euerlasting ioye and felicitie, and in the meane while we are commaunded to loue euell ouer very enemies. They priests when he was most deuoutly occupied about sacrifice to make intercession vnto God for the people, went into the inwarde partes of the vayle: But our priest entred ruen into the very heauens, there to pleade our cause before god the father, whome we are made vnto by our ambassadour Christ Iesu, who is the head of the church. For it is not possible that the bodye be awaye where the head is present: And by reason of suche an hye priest, we haue a surer hope then the Jewes had by meanes of theyr hye priestes, because theyr priestes were ordeined without an othe, and ours with an othe: the which god would haue made to thentente we shoulde haue a more sure confidence in his promises, if the priest by whose mediation we hope after the immortall felicitie promised vs, were by an othe approued an euerlasting hye priest, and that of god, which elleswile can not lye. For thus speaketh he in the prophetically psalme: The lord swaue and will not repent, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedech. Therefore looke howe much difference there is betwene heauen and earth, betwene thynges that lasteth for a tyme, and thynges eternall, betwene those that are mortal, and such as are immortall, betwene worldly thynges and heavenly: of so muche a better testament was our hye priest Iesus made promiser, and so muche the certainer promise, as the promise among men confirmed with an othe, is of more certaintye, then a simple promise.

The text.

And among them manie were made priestes, because they were not suffered to endure by the reason of death. But this man (because he endureth ever) hath an euerlasting priesthood. Wherefore, he is able also euer to saue them to the uttermost, that come vnto God by hym, seeing he euer lyueth to make intercession for vs. For suche an hye priest it became vs to haue, which is holy, harmlesse, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher then heauen. Which needeth not daily (as pouer hye priestes) to offer up sacrifice, first for his owne synnes, and then for the peoples synnes. For that did he once, when he offered up himselfe. For the lawe maketh manie priestes, which haue infirmitie: but the order of the oth that came since the lawe, maketh the sonne priest, which is perfect for euermore.

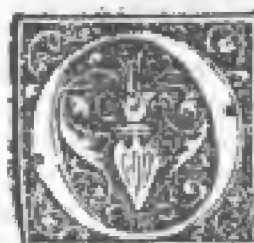
Whereouer vnder the law of Moses it was needefull to haue manie priestes instituted, eyther because they shoulde execute the priestes office by tournes appoynted, eyther because that death woulde not suffer them alwayes to continue in theyr ministracion, and by that meanes, the promiser oftentimes chaunged was verie uncertayne of his promise. But this our priest is one for all, and needeth not anye successoure, but by reason he endureth for euer, he hath a continuall priesthood.

wherefore

Wherfoze he is hable to bring those vnto saluaciō, whom he hath begun to saue, because they haue hym alwayes a redy prieste, by whose meanes they may come vnto god. For Christ liueth euer to thinke that whensoever nede requireth, he may make intercessiō for his vnto god. For he hath not so offered a sacrifice that it should profite a fewe a short while, but that it should be auailable to all men, and at al times hable to pacifye gods wrath. Therefore sens the lawe was heauenlye and perfitte, it was meete that our hys prieste should also be such a one, that is to say, godly, without decepte, vndefiled, soure seperate from the companye of synners, lyfted vp about all the heauens, who needeth not dayly to offer vyppre sacrifice as Moyses priestes did, first for his own synnes, and then for the peoples synnes. For what manour of atonemakers were they, who themselves had nede to be made at one with god, vnto whome they made intercession for other menies offences: what manour a sacrifice was that, which for sundrie synnes was of necessitie oftentimes to be made again? Out hys priest, who had no synne of his owne, toke vnto him the synnes of the whole worlde, and once offered vp a sacrifice for all menne, not a beast, but hys owne proper persone. For Moyses lawe, as it was weake and vnperfite, so dyd it ordeyne suche hys priestes as were subiect to infirmitie. But s^c worde of the othe that I spake of right now, which declareth that a better lawe shall succede in dede of the olde, ordeineth not euery man indifferently, but the very sonne of god a priest for euermore, ready at all times and mete to make intercession for vs, for that neyther death can take hym away, neither any infirmitie let hym, to be a conueniente and perfitte helper for vs.

The. viii. Chapter.

Of the thynges whiche I haue spoken, this is the pith: that we haue clache on hys prieste The. x. as sitteth on the ryght hande of the seate of maiestie in heauen, and is a minister of holpe thynges, and of the trewe tabernacle, whiche God pyght, and not manne. For euery hys prieste is ordeined to offer giftes and sacrifices: wherfoze it is of necessitie, that this man haue somewhat also to offer. For he were not a priest, if he were on the earth where are priestes that according to the lawe offer giftes which serue vnto the example, & shadow of heauenly thynges: euen as the answer of god was geuen vnto Moyses, when he was about to fynish the tabernacle. & ake hebe (said he) that thou make al thynges accordyng to the pattern whiche is shewed to thee in the mount.



Qf the thynges whiche we haue so largely entreated of before, the chiefe poynte and effecte is, that hereafter we haue not in admiration Moyses hys prieste, synce wee haue one soe excellence in all poyntes that he sytteth on the ryght hye of the royall seate of god in heauen, so the entente ys maye duely make, not those figuratiue sacrifices prescribed by Moyses, but the trewe and heauenly sacrifices; and bee within the tabernacle.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

I meane not that figuratiue tabernacle pitched of man, but in the secreete places of the true tabernacle pitched by almighty God, disseuering heauenly things from earthly. Furthermore sens that euery hye priest is wouete to be ordeyned for this intente, that he may offer giftes and sacrifices to God, howe were it possible for him to be a lawfull hye p[ri]est whiche hath nothing to offer. Nowe if it so be that an earthly p[ri]esthood were geuen to Christ after lyke manour as vnto other, then wote he no p[ri]est, for that he neuer offered, ne offereth any of those sacrifices whiche are accustomedly offered of other p[ri]estes, acco[rd]ing to the p[re]scripcion of the lawe, the whiche sacrifices are nothing els but shadowes, and certayne figures of the heauenly temple and celestiaall sacrifices. For whatsoeuer Christe did, euen in earth, because it was not done after the fleshe but after the spirite, & came from heauen and thither redet[ur], the same compared vnto the grossenes of Moses p[ri]esthood, is woorthely called heauenly. And this god seemeth to haue signified when p[re]scribing vnto Moses a fo[r]me to buylde a temple, he speaketh in thys wise: See thou make all thinges acco[rd]ing to the patroun whiche was shewed thee in the mounte. For Moses saue with his spiritual eyes, an other houslyer manour of temple: an other manour of sacrifices and p[ri]esthood, after the patroun whereof, he drew out in the meane season a certayn grosse figure of thinges, till the tyme should come that god woulde haue shadowes geue place vnto trew thynges. Nowe is the same tyme already p[re]sente.

The text.

But nowe hath he obtained a p[ri]esthode so much the more excellent, as he is the mediator of a better testamente, whiche was confirmed in better promises. For yf that first testamente had been such, that no fauour coulde haue bene found in it, then should no place haue bene sought for the seconde. For in rebuking them, he saith vnto them. Behold the daies come, saith the Lorde, and I will finish vpon the house of Israel, and vpon the house of Iuda, a newe testamente: not lyke the testamente that I made with theyr fathers in that daie, when I toke them by the handes, to leade them out of the lande of Egypte. For they continued not in my testamente, and I regarded them not saith the Lorde. For this is the testamente that I will make with the house of Israel. After those dayes, saith the Lorde, I will put my lawes in theyr myndes, and in theyr hertes I will write them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teache euery man his neighbour, and euery man his brother, saying: knowe the Lorde: for they shall knowe me, from the leake to the mosse of them. For I will be mercifull ouer theyr iniquitousnes, and their iniquities and theyr iniquitys I will I thinke vpon no more. In that he saith a newe testamente, he hath wote ouer the olde. For that whiche is wote ouer and wote olde, is readye to vanishe awaye.

We haue an heauenly hye p[ri]est, and a p[ri]esthood worthie and conueniente for hym, so much more excellent then this other p[ri]esthood, as the new testamente of the gospel excelleth the olde of Moses, and as the promises of the new be more magnificate and greater then theyr promises of the olde. There the bodyes were cleansed with the bloude of beastes: here soules are purified with the bloude of Christe. There a lande is promised: here are promised heauenly rewarde. And in this testamente our heauenly hye p[ri]est is a mediator betwene god and manne, after an heauenly manour: If that fyrr testamente had bene suche a one that nothing hadde lacked therein, as the Jewes doe suppose, then should there no place haue bene sought for the seconde. For it was but superfluous to adde anything where al thinges were perfite.

of S. Paule to the Hebrewes. Cap. ix. Fol. ciii.

Nowe God complayneth that that fyrste testamente was unprofytable, and promyseth a better, and of more efficacie speakynge in the Prophetes Ieremye on thys wyse: Beholde the dayes come, sayeth the Lorde, I wyll fynishe vpon the house of Isracc, and vpon the house of Iuda a newe testamente, not lyke the testamente whiche I made wyth their fathers in the day when I toke them by the handes to leade them oute of the lande of Egypte: because they contynued not in my testament, I againe for my part regarded them not, sayth the Lorde.

For thys is the cōuenaunte that I wyll make wyth the house of Isracc, sayeth the Lorde, when I wyll not graue my lawes in stones, or booke, as hath bene proued in daye, but wyll put them into theyr myndes, and wyte them in their heartes. And I wyll be verely theyr God, and agayne they shall be verely my people. Nether shall they gyue my doctrine by hande one to an other, in suche wyse that every man shall be compelled to instructe his neyghboure, and every one his brother sayinge (knowe the Lorde:) because that not one ofe then a fewe Jewes, but all the people of the worlde shall knowe me from the leaste vnto the greatest, that I wyll be made mercifull

thynntercession of my sonne, and forgyue theyr synnes and

respases, nether wyll I any more thynke vpon

theyr wycked dedes. Ye haue hearde bys

wordes who promyseth a newe testamente,

because the olde was unprofytable.

Nowe that whiche is called newe,

that is to say, spiritual, signifieth,

that the olde, that is

to wyte, the carnall,

musste be taken

awaye.

and dysanulded. Ellys coulde not thys testa-

mente be called newe, excepte that whiche

was before, were worne oute and

woren olde. Nowe that that is

worne oute, and woren

olde, is nye gone,

forasmuche as it

draweth by ly-

ke & lytle to

an ende.

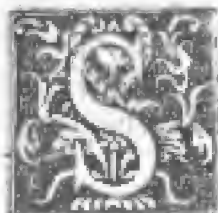
The ix. Chapter.

The olde testamente then had verely ordinaunces, and seraynges of God, and worship holynes. For there was a foretabernacle made, wherein was the lyght, the table, and the shewbrade whych is called holpe. But wythin the seconde bayle was ther a tabernacle, wherhe is called holpest of all, wherhe had the golden scrute, and the Ark of the testamente, ouerlayde rounde about wyth golde, wherein was the golden pot wyth manna, and

The text.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Secondly, of the rodde, that sprong, and the tables of the Testament.ouer the Arke were the Cherubins of glorie, wherowpon the seate of grace. Of whiche thynges we can not now particularly speake.



Some man wyl here saye: what, was the religion of the olde temple a vayne religion? Nay not so. In tymes past that olde temple also, whose religion is now at an ende and gonne by the succession of euangelicall veritie, had certayne approued customes, and prescribed ceremonies the whiche made an vtwarde shewe of iuste and persyte liuing. It had also a certain holynesse, but the same was a wo:ldly holynesse for that it stood in vtwarde thynges and visible. Of the whiche kynde of holynesse there seemed also a great deale to be among the Iudayns and Gentiles. But the buyldynge of the temple was suche, that one parte therof was counted more holpe then an other till a man came vnto that parte whiche seemed holpest of all. For in the fyrste place there was made a tabernacle wherin were kepte with much reuerence the lyght, the table, and the seuen holpe loaves, whiche they called the shewe bread, by reason they were wonte to be set out for a shewe on the holy table. And this parte of the temple they called onely holpe because it was so seuered from vnholy thynges, that it was yet verie farre from those thynges whiche were accounted moste holpe. But wpythin the seconde bayle whiche parted this parte of the temple from other, there was an other tabernacle that for the excellenre of holynesse was called holpest of all, and in thys were conteyned certayne of the holier sorte of relikes, as the golden Censer, & the Arke called the Arke of the testamente, couered rounde aboute wpyth plates of golde, hangynge in it the golden potte, (wherin Manna was reserved a monument of an aunciente myracle wrought what tyme, the Hebrewes being very hongry, there rained a newe kynde of meate downe from heauen) and Aarons rodde the whiche by a wonderfull myracle neuer harde of before bare leaues after it was cut from the stemme, and budded out into flowers, wherof afterwarde came Almons. There were in it also the tables called the tables of the testamente, because in them were the commaundementes grauen with Goddes fyngre.ouer thys were ymages with wynges called Cherubynes representing the Maiestie and gloire of God whycher ouershadowed the mercy seate with their wynges, all the whiche thynges had a certayne signification of holier thynges afterwarde disclosed by the gospel. But it were to long to speake of euery of the pyncples particularly, and to shewe what was meante and signified by the same. It shalbe sufficient for vs to compare the effecte of ppythe of the whole matter to the ppythode of Chyrlle.

The text.

When these thynges were thus ordeyned, the priestes went alwayes into the first tabernacle, which executed the seruice of the bakke thynges, But into the second went the hie prest alone once euery yere, that wpythout bloude whych he offered for hymselfe, and for the ignorances of the people. Wherewith the holy ghost this signified, that the way of holpe thynges was not yet opened, whyle as yet the first tabernacle was standynge. Whycher was a similitude for the tyme then present, in whycher were offered gyftes & sacrefices, that coulde not make the mannet perfect, as petycynng to the conscience, wpyth only meates and drynkes, and diuers washynge and suffitynges of fleshe, whiche were ordeyned vntyl the tyme of reformation.

Nowe

Nowe when the temple was thus deuoyded, and the holy reliques bestowed in their places, all priestes indifferently whiche executed the ceremonies belonging vnto the sacrifices, entred dayly into that fyrst tabernacle. But into that seconde, whiche was very holy, went the hie prieste (who was chiefe in dignitie among the priestes) alone once euery yeare and no oftence, and that not without the blood of a beaste, whiche he there offered first for his owne synnes, and then for the synnes of the people committed by error and ignorance. By the whiche thynges, as it were by certayne darke figures, the holy ghoste signified that at that tyme there was as yet no open waye or entrance vnto those places whiche are in verie deede holpe, and haue no manour of earthly infection. For while the hie byshoppe entred into the most sectete parte of the temple, and as yet that fyrst tabernacle was standynge, whiche hadde a symilitude of those tymes in the whiche the people were by certayne grosse ceremonies kepte (howe so euer it were) in the Jewische religion, lest they shoulde haue fallen to greater enormities, there were certayne grosse and vulgar ceremonies done by the common sorte of priestes in the sayd tabernacle. Gyftes were offered, beastes were kylled and offered vp in sacrifice, the whiche thynges had so a certayne similitude of purification, that they coulde not yet make thei perfitly cleane (as touching the conscience and soule whereby God esteemeth vs) wholyed them, althoughe, as concernynge the bodye and estimation of the world, they seemed to giue some cleanness and puritie. For whatso euer was there done, pertepned chiefly vnto the bodye, for that it stode in shopse of meates & drynke, whereas in verie deede, meate neyther purifieth, nor defileth the soule: and stode also in diuerse washynge and poungations of the fleshe, whiche were not instituted for this intent that they shoulde gyue manne perfyte righteouslytie, but because the people shoulde by these rudimentes and fyrste principles, fall in bye by lytle and litle with true religion, and by shadowes bee braught to veritie, and made recepuable of better thynges, whiche shoulde be opened by the doctrine of the gospell, when tyme shoulde come. Here haue we hearde the effects of all the religion, by reason wherof the Jewes do stande so muche in their owne conceytes. Nowe let vs compare the dignitie of our hie priest with these foresayde thynges.

But Christ beyng our hie prieste of good thynges to come, came by a greater and a more perfecte tabernacle, not made with handes: that is to say, not of this buldypng, neither by ybloud of goates and calves, but by his own bloud he entred in once into the holy place, & founde eternal redemption. For if the bloud of oren & of goates, & the ashes of a yong calbe, when it was sprinkled, purifieth the vniuers, as touching the purging of the flesh: howe much more shall the bloud of Christ (which through the eternal spirit, offered hymself without spot to god) pouge your conscience from dead workes, for to serue the lyuing god.

The text.

For Christ beyng our hie prieste, a promiser, and auctor, not of corporal purification, neither of the good thynges of this world whiche haue an ende, but of euerlastynge and heavenly good thynges, entred, not by the waye wrought with meynes handes, but by an other tabernacle not made wth handes, that is to saye, not of this buldypng, the whiche as menne doe sette it vp, so can they pull it downe agayne, but by verie heaven, entred (I say) into the places which are verely holy, and verely farre from al infection of mortalitie not bynynginge wth hym the bloude of goates and calves therewith to pacifie Goddes wrath, but his owne precious bloude whiche he shed for vs in the aulter of the

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

croffe, wherewith he redeemed not one nation onely, but all mankynde from all synnes, and that not one peate, but for euer vntyl the worldes ende, so that they tounpunge from their former mystryunge, know Christ, and as muche as in them lyethe folowe hym in their lyfe and conuersation.

For what comparision is it to compate a domine beaste vnto Christe bothe God and man? If so be that the bloud of Oxen and Goates, or the brent ashes of a younge Cowe sprynkeled vpon vncleane persones cleanse them, as touchyng a certayne carnall and figuratiue puritie and holynesse: Howe muche more then shall the bloude of Christe, who not by corporall hye, but thowhe the eternall spirite desirous of mannes saluation offered, not a brute beaste, but hym selfe a pure and vndefyled sacrifice vnto almyghty God the father, purifie, not your bodyes, but your conscience from these woordes whiche in very dede byng death vnto the soule: Hys death deliuereth vs from endlesse death, and hys mooste pure spirite purifieth our spirite whiche was before vncleane. In bothe purifications is bloude, but yet is there a greate difference. In bothe is death, but an vnequall death. In bothe is a spirite, but the one is farre vnylike the other. For what thyng sooner was there done by shadowes and certayne fygures, the same Christ accomplished in dede.

The scyle.

And for this cause is he the mediator of þe newe testament, that through death which chaunced for the redemption of those transgressors that were vnder the first testamente they wherby are called, myght receive þe promise of eternal inheritance. For wher as is, a testamente, there must also (of necessity) be the death of hym that maketh the testamente. For the testamente taketh auctorite when men are dead: for it is yet of no valur, as longe as he that maketh the testamente is alive, for whiche cause also, neuer the first testamente was ordeyned without bloude.

Because that he who in the olde testamente made intercession and was a mediator bwtwene God and men broughte not the people to the petyte state of innocencie, therefore Christe succeeded in his rowme, and became a newe mediatoure of a newe testament, to the intent that all synners taken awaye thowhe his death (the whiche by that first testamente coulde not be abolyshed and taken awaye, but remainyd, in suche wise that they broughte vs oute of the fauoure of almyghty God) not onely the Jewes, but also all tho whosoever haue bene called to Christes felowshippe, maye nowe thowhe the doctrine of the gospell receiue the promysse and hope of the eternal inheritance. For wheresoever this worde testamente is hearde, there must nedes be the death of hym that maketh the testamente, elles shoulde it be no testamente, or yf it were, it were of none auctoritie. For the death of the testatoure maketh the same of auctoritie, whiche hath not as yet sure strengthe nor is ratified so longe as the layde testatoure is alive. Because it lyeth in hys power to alire it yf he will: Wherfore forasmuche as that olde testamente hadde also the name of a testamente, it was not ordeyned withoute bloude and death, but of a beaste, and suche a beaste as ellwise shoulde haue perished.

The text.

For when moyses had declared all the commaundement to all the people according to the lawe, he toke the bloud of calves and of goates with water and purple wooll, and psope, and sprynkeled bothe the booke and all the people saying: this is the bloude of the testamente, which God hath appoynted vnto you. Moreover, he sprynkeled the tabernacle, with bloud also, and all the ministeryng vessels. And almosse all thynges are by the lawe purged with bloude, and withoute shedyng of bloude is no remission.

For

For as it is read in the booke of Exodus, when Moyses had read all the lawe of God vnto the people, and declared vnto them what reward they shoulde loke after for keeping the same, and what punishment they shoulde dreade if they dyd not regarde it accordingly, to thentent the couenaunt made betwene God and the people shoulde be confirmed, he took a cuppe, and therein myngled the bloude of Calues and Goates with water, and purple wolle, and spynkled bothe the booke oute of the whiche he read the Lawes commandementes, and lykewylse all the people with Psope, sayeng: This is the wytnessyng bloude, and confirmer of that testament whiche God hath commaunded you to kepe: And was not onely contented thus to doe, but spynkeled also with bloude the tabernacle, and all the holy vessels therein whiche they used in sacrifices. Lykewylse in all other rites and approued customes what thinges so euer were purified accordyng vnto the prescription of Moses lawe, were purified with bloude. Neither was there anye remission of synnes but by sheddyng of bloude.

It is nede then, that the similitudes of heuently thinges be purified with such thinges; but that the heuently thinges themselves, be purified with better sacrifices then are these. For Christ is not entred into the holpe places that are made with handes (whiche are similitudes of true thinges) but is entred into very heuen for to appeere now in the sight of god for to offer himself often as the hve priest entred into the holy place euerie yere with strange bloud, for the must he haue often suffred since the world began. But now in the ende of the world, hath he appeere once to pur synne to syght by the offering vp of hymselfe. And as it is apoued vnto all men that they shall once dye, and than cometh the iudgement tyme so Christ was once offered to take awaye the synnes of many, and vnto them that loke for hym shall he appeere agayne, withoute synne vnto saluation.

The text.

And truly it was conuenient that suche thynges as in earth represented the similitude and shadowe of heauently thynges, shoulde be done with suche manour of grosse and carnall purifications. But when veritie was once come to lyght, then was it mete that the heauently sacrifices them selves shoulde be made with better oblations, and cause a trerter puritie. For, as I haue sayde, euen all that Christe did in earth is heuently. For truly he entred not in to the holpe places made with handes, whiche are rather supposed holpe then be holy in dede, and maye be tourned vnto a prophane vse, and were nothyng els but certayne shadowes and figures of thynges that were verely holpe, but entred into very heauen where as dwelleth the God immortall with hys holy angels, before whom he as a lesul Byshoppe maketh intercession for all mennes synnes, purchasyng hym selfe fauourable audience with hys owne bloude, whiche of his mere and free charitie he shedde for vs: and that dyd he with so effectuell a sacrifice, that it shall not be nedefull for hym euerie yere to do the same agayne, as the hve priest of the olde testamente entred in to the moste secret parte of the temple yearly. Neither is it anye marvell that the sacrifice made by the hve priest of Moyses was not of lyke efficace, sence he was bothe subiecte vnto synnes, and offered by a beastes bloud, and not his owne.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

If Christe had bene suche an hypocrite, then lythe there hadde so manye ages and yeares begonne agayne sence the creation of the worlde, he shoulde of necessitye often tymes haue offered vp a sacrifice lyke as the priestes of the olde testament dyd. Howe was he suche a one, that it was insufficente for hym once to offre by hymselfe, and once with the sprinkling of his own blode, to take awaye the synnes of all ages vntill the worlde's ende. And that was done, not from the begynnyng of the worlde; but nye the ende of the same, when it was openly knowen to euery man, that al the world was defiled with synne, and that there was no reynede but of God onely, bycause it shoulde manifestly appeare howe effectually a priest, and of what greate vertue and power he was; who with one sacrifice poureged so greate a heape of synnes; and lefte behynde him a ready and an easie remedye, which was, that the same sacrifice shoulde be sufficient for al menne, tyme oute of measure, that woulde not make them selves unworthy thet of. For he toke vpon hym, not only thre synnes who manye yeares before put hope of saluatyon in hym; but also theys who would manye yeares after beleue his gospel.

Wherfore there is not why the worlde shoulde loke after an other priest, or an other sacrifice to poure synnes, but as it is appointed to al men that they shall once dye without hope to retourne agayne into this lyfe wherein we oft tymes fall, and oft tymes are poureged agayne: and as there is nothinge looked for after euery mannes deathe, but that extreme iudgement whereby endlesse rewardes shalbe adyudged bothe to good and badde: so lyke as Christe (who dyeng once was offered by for all the world, taking vpon him, as much as in hym laye, all mennes synnes, bycause he whyles he paynted for all) woulde haue nothinge remayne after this lyfe but that last iudgement wherein he shall appeare agayne vnto the worlde, not as before lyke a sacrifice appointed to be slayne, or lyke a worker of myschaunce, and one worthy of punishment, but as a glorious person and one that knoweth no maner of synne: he shall I saie, appeare to their blysse and saluation, who beinge nowe purged thorow his deathe, perseuer in good and vertuous lyving till he come agayne, not to be offered by, but a iudice desired of the good, and dreadfull to the wicked.

The x. Chapter.

The text.

For the lawe chaunge the shadowe of good thynges to come, and not the verye fashion of the thynges themselves) can neuer with those sacrifices which they offer, yere by yere, continuallye make the comyns therunto pfect. For whyles they of those sacrifices haue ceased to haue bene offered, blasphemeth that the offerers durmygh whose hande had no more confidence of synnes; wherther they in those sacrifices, as these do, mention made, of synnes euery yere. For the blood of oxen and of goates cannot take awaye synnes.



Either more the cause why the hye priest of the olde testament coulde not do the lyke, was by reason that that lawe forbade muche as it had not the trulye and true fashion, but only a certayne shadowe of good thynges, which rather beguyled somewhat, then brought any thyng to effect, could neuer with her vsuall sacrifice of beastes (all though they were by those priestes continuallye offered yere by yere) make suche pfecte as came to pacifie God with vneffectuall oblations by the mediation of weake priestes.

For

For yf perfection myghte haue bene attayned thereby, shoulde not the same sacrifices once offered, haue ceased to be offered any more: Now in these sacrifices when so euer they be offered agayne, there is mention made a freshe of the former synnes, whiche thing playnly declareth that they haue no confidence in one sacrifice. Els for what purpose vpd they euery yeare offre agayne the same sacrifices, if one had so pouerged from all synne, that no conscience therof had remayned in those whiche had once offered and bene pouerged: For seeing that synne is the malacie of the soule, and not of the bodie, a grosse and bodily sacrifice, as is the bloude of Oxen and Goates, can in no wyle take awaye the displease of the mynde. The onely spirituall and heauently sacrifice of Christe is able to doe this thinge sufficiently: the whiche thow we sayth and Baptisme so taketh awaye at once all the synnes of our former lyfe, be they neuer so manye neuer so heynous, that there remaineth no feare, or remorse in conscience, so that we wyl only beware that we fall not agayne into our olde enormities, and detestable dedes. For soo farre wylde is it from the trawth that God was made mercifull by reason that such sacrifices were oftentimes offered, that beinge rather offended therewith he requyred some one effectual sacrifice whiche shoulde contynue for euer.

Wherefore, when he commeth into the world he sayeth: Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not haue: but a body hast thou ordeyned me. Burnt offerings also for synne hast thou not allowed. Then sayth yhu, I am here. In the begynnyng of the booke it is written of me that I woulde do thy will, O God. About when he sayth: sacrifice and offering, and burnt sacrifices & syne offerings thou wouldest not haue, neither hast thou allowed them (woorde yete are offered by the same) then saye he to his father, I am here, to do thy will, O god: he taketh a waye for synne, that is, the father, by whiche we are made halp euen by the offering of the body of yhu, once for all.

For the Sonne as it were about to come into the world to make God the father mercifull vnto the same with the sacrifice of his owne moste precious bodye, speaketh vnto hym in the mysticall Dialyne, on this wyse: Sacrifice and offeringe thou wouldest not haue, but a bodye hast thou ordeyned me: Burnt sacrifices, and other sacrifices accustomed to pouerge the peoples synnes, thou hast not allowed. Than sayd I: Loe, yhu, that in the begynnyng of the booke I am signified to be a sacrifice. I am here to do thy will, O God. When therefore he sayeth in these wordes: Sacrifice and offeringe, and burnt sacrifices, and sacrifices for synne thou wouldest not haue, whyther allowest thou any of these sacrifices, whiche were wylde to be offered accordyng vnto the prescription of the olde lawe. And immediatly addeth: Loe I am here to obey thy will, O God, and to offer a sacrifice pleasaunte and acceptable vnto thy mynde: in these wordes, I haue, he taketh a waye that firste prynceth as displeasaunte vnto God, to thentent he maye stablyshe the later therewith to satisfye Goddes will and pleasure.

What was this will of God, who thus lotheth the lawefull sacrifices of the olde testamēt and greatly desireth a newe kynde of sacrifice: Forsooth it was this, because it sopleth his free goodnes towards vs, that his heavenly sonne (that is to saye Christe) shoulde take vpon hym mannes bodye, and dyeng for the synnes of the whole worlde, pacifie all manne by one sacrifice duely made, of these synnes, in suche wise that there nederth no hereafter anye

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wher blodie sacrifices.

The text.

And euer pured is ready daily ministering and offering often tymes one manner of oblation wyche can neuer take away synne. But this man after he hath offered one sacrifice for synnes, is set doune for euer on the right hande of god, and from henceforth resteth till his foes be made his foote stoole. For with one offering hath he made perfecte for euer them that are sanctified. The holy ghoſt himselfe also beareth witness, euen when he saith before: this is the Testament that I wyll make vnto them: After those daies (saith the lord) I wyll putte my lawes in their heartes and in their myndes wyll I write them, and thes synnes and iniquities wyll I remember no more. And where remission of these thinges is there is, no more offering for synne.

Whosoever is a priest of the olde testament, is constrainede daily to minister, and oftentymes to offer the same sacrifices agayne, whiche howe ofte so euer they be offered can neuer cleane take away synnes, so that it is an endlesse busynesse to bothe parties, that is to saie, both to the offerer, and to the priest by whom the oblation is made. But Christe thonly sacrifice once offered for the synnes of al them which haue, do, or wyll beleue his promyses, sitteth now on the right hande of God the father, receyving for nothyng els but that whiche onely remaineth, that is to saie, to haue all the membyres of his bodie assembled together, and vntyll at the length it come to passe, accordyng as it is promysed in the psalme, that his enemyes (who are rebelles agaynst the gospel) be made his foote stoole. But in the meane season he nebeth not to offer himselfe agayne for vs, because that with one oblation he hath sufficiently perfished all those for euer, whiche haue deserved to be sanctified thowowe faith, in suche wise that none of our olde synnes can be layed vnto oure charge. That I saie now, euen the holy ghoſt hym selfe witnesseth speakyng by the mouth of the prophet, and shewyng long before that the same thyng shoulde be, whiche we see alreadye come to passe. His wordes are these: This is the testament that I wyll make vnto them after those daies (saith the lord) when I shall put my lawes in their heartes, and write them in their myndes, and their synnes and iniquities wyll I remember no more, muche lesse then wyll I take vengeance for the same. Furthermore after that al synnes be once pardoned for euer, what neede is there of the Jewelike sacrifices, whiche were made to pouge and take away synnes.

The text.

Heing therefore brethren, that by the meanes of the blode of Iesu we haue libertie to enter into the holy place, by the newe and lyving waye wher he hath prepared for vs, through the baptyſme (that is to say, by his blood:) And seeing also that we haue an heuynly wherly is ruler ouer the house of God, let vs drawe upgh wth a true heart in a sure faith, spynkeled in our hartes: the euill conscience put away & washed in our bodies wth pure to we: Let vs kepe the protection of our hope, without waivering (for he is faithfull that promysed) and let vs consider one another, to remembre that we may prouoke vnto loue, & vnto good workes, not forsaking the felowship that we haue among our selues, as the manner of some is: but let vs exhort one another, and that so muche the more by cause we see that the day draweth upgh.

Heing therefore brethren, that the conscience of synnes is rauen awaye wher he feared vs to make intercession to almighty God, and that we haue an assurance giuen vs to enter into the holy place, let vs trustyng vpo the most sacred blode of Iesu, which he shedde for our reconciliation, and therby opened vs a waye and entrance farre dyuerse from the olde waye, that is to saie, a felthe, newe, lyvinge, and euertlastyng waye, whiche after it is once opened can neuer be shutte agayne, the whiche waye he beganne vnto vs entering

tryng in fpyll of all thowhe the bayle, that is to saye, by his fleshe wherewith his Godhed was couered for a tyme in this worlde, and after the same fleshe was assumed and taken vp into heauen, heuently thynges were opened: And fpyke we haue a greate ppyct promysed of God after the order of Melchisedech, whom God hath made ruler ouer all his house, that is to saye, ouer the Church. catholyke, the whiche church he gouerneth not as a minstre, but as shautout and Lorde thereof, lette vs also in the meane tyme goe whither Christe hath opened vs the waye: let vs goe, I saye, not with bodily feete into a temple made of stones, but with a pure harte, and a very sure belefe to obtayne our petition entree into the heauenly temple, but fpyll spynkled, not touchyng the body with the bloud of a beast, but touchyng the mynde and spirite with the bloud of Iesu Christ, & thereby purified fro the conscience of oure elde synnes, & furthemoze washed in our bodies too with the pure water of Baptysme that scouteth and washeth awaye all the fylthe of the soule: Then remayneth it that we perseuer in the thynges we haue once begonne, and kepe stedfastly, and without any waueringe, the hope of immortall lyfe whiche we haue professed in Baptysme, trustyng in this one thyng, that God who promysed is saythfull and sure of his promys, and cannot deceaue if he would so that we contynue still in sayth.

Furthemoze because we are made the members of one bodye let vs cleane together by mutuall charitie and agreement, consideryng with our selues how muche eche of vs hath profited in the profession of the ghospell, not bycause to enuie hym who hath ouergone vs, or to despise hym that is ouergone or left behynde, but to prouoke to charitie and good woorkes by good example and exhortacions gyuyng one to an other. The whiche thyng shall come to passe, if the goyng forwarde of oure brother do make vs more despyouse to lyue well and vertuously, and also yf we perceyue anye to be slacke in goyng forwarde, doe then with a brotherly carefulnes ppycke him forth to better thynges, alwayes reioysyng at them whych goo before, and makynge moche of those that do their diligence, not suffring any one to perishe from our flocke by reason he is forsaken, as some (occasion setuyng thereunto) are wont to leaue of from their good begynnynge: But let one of vs by al manoure of wayes and meanes possible styre and incourage an other to go forth to the ende in that we fpyll beganne. And thys thyng ought ye so muche the more earnestly to doe, because ye see that the dape of the Lorde is at hande, whiche will gyue euery man rewarde accordyng vnto his desertes, and leaue no place or oportunitie to amende what hath bene done amysse, but whatsoeuer hath bene done shall be then examyned with exacte iudgement. And suche trespasses as are committed by erreure or fraiphte of man shall easely be pardoned.

For if we sinne wilfully after that we haue receyued the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for synnes, but a fearefull lookinge for iudgement, & by what tyme, whych shall denounce the aduersaries. He that despiseth Moses lawe, without merce vnder two or thre wytnesses: howe muche sorer (suppose ye) shal he be punished whych treaseth vnder sore the sonne of god: & counteth the bloude of the resourment, wherewith he was sanctified as an unholy thing, and doeth dishonour the spytte of grace: For we knowe hym that hath said: it belongeth vnto me to take vengeance, and recompence sayth the Lord. And agayne the Lord shall iudge by a people. It is a fearefull thyng to fall into the handes of the luyng god.

The xxxi.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

But after we haue once knowen the truth by the gospel being taught, what we must hope after, and what we ought to eschewe, and what rewardes good menne shall haue, and what puell, yf we then willingly fall agayne into deadly synnes, whiche Christ hath once washed away with his precious blood in that he dyed once alone, and neuer wyl dye agayne, there remaineth then no dooste or sacrifice for vs whiche haue so csteious fallen to oure olde lyfe and synfull lyving, wherby our synnes maye be freely released agayne thowgh baptisme. What then remaineth? Forsooth a certayne dreadfull looking for of the laste iudgement, and forthwith a cruell and tourmenting fyre whiche in reuengement of the goodnes of God despised, shall deuoure the aduersaries. Thinke you that he shall scape unpunished that hath despised the lawe of the gospel? The more mercifull and beneficiall that God is, the more punishment shall he haue, who willingly and wyttyngly hath mocked therewith. He mocketh with the gospel, whiche after he hath bene once called to the numbre of the chyl- dren of God, wylfullye putteth himselfe into the numbre of the Devils ser- uantes. If there were so greate punishment among the Jewes, that who- soeuer obeyed not the priest teaching the commaundementes of Moyses lawe, that is to wytte, yf he that was commaunded to absterne from synnes lesse he dyd notwithstanding of a selfe wyl or dysobedient stewardenes eate the same, and afterwarde, being firste convicted by two or three witnesses, was done to death without merce: Howe muche greater punishment then deserueth he to haue, who treadeth vnderfote not anye one priest of lowe estimation, but Je- sus Christ the sonne of God? Truly he treadeth hym vnder fote, whoso despi- seth his so greate benefiter: whoso counteth, I saye, not the bloude of a beaste, but his holye blood wherewith the newe testament was sanctified, as an vnho- ly thyng, specially the same bloude wherewith he was once purged and made cleane from all hys olde synnes: synallye whoso dyshonoureth the spirite by whom he hath obtayned the grace of the gospel, by cause that spirite once put awaye thowgh hys hypocounesse, he trayterously gructhe vp the temple of God vnto the dyuell. Do we therefore assure our selves that we shall escape unpunished because men do not by and by take punishment on such as doe swaue from the partie of an euangelicall and christian lyfe? We knowe hym that hath sayde: It belongeth to me to take vengeance: I wyl recompence sayth the Lorde. And agayne in an other place: The Lorde shall iudge the people. Let not any synner flatter hym selfe, and thinke that he is oute of dan- ger yf he escape the handes of a man reuenger. No man can escape the handes of God. But it is a dreadfull thyng to fall into the handes of the lyving god. Howe the more that we were to be praised when ye fyrst began to profess the gospel, the more shame and rebuke shall it be for you to fall agayne into your former lyfe.

The text.

Call to remembrance the dayes that are passed, in the which after ye had receiued light, ye endured a great fight of aduersities, partly whyle all men wondered and galed at you for the shame & tribulation that was don vnto you: partly whyle ye became ch- paignons of them which so passed their time. For ye became partakers also of the afflic- tions which happened through my bondes, & toke in waite the spoyling of your goodes, and that with gladnes, knowing in your selves, howe that ye haue in beuen a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, wherby hath a greater recompence of rewardes.

And lest that come to passe, cal vnto youre remembrance the tymes passed,
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in the whiche after ye had receiued lighte by the doctrine of the ghospell, and saythe ye contagiouslye indured dyuerse tryghes of aduersities in hope of the lpe to come: partly whyles all suche as hate Chyistes doctrine wounded and galed at you for the shames and displeasures which were done vnto you: partly whyles thozowe the instigation of chistian charitie, ye of your owne accord became partakers both of the shames & afflictions that were done vnto other christians, or els Apostles, who (the world vnterly contemned) lyued after the rule of the ghospel. For ye were willing to partakers of the afflictions and shame whiche amonge the wycked people seemed to happen by reason of my bondes and imprisonment, and were soye for an other mannes sorowe, & caused an other mannes iniurie vnto you. For yett ye dyd so farre forthe onelye declare your selues true christians, but also gladly suffered the spoyling of your goodes, declaring vndoubtedly by dede selfe that you knowe and beleue howe there are better tryghes layde vp for you in heauen whiche neyther the pryue theefe, nor the violent robber can bereaue you of: yea rather those tryghes increase by the losse of worldly gooddes whiche we suffer for the name of Chyiste. These dedes dyd with good cause put you in assurance and sygne belefe to obteyne Chyistes promyses. For very greate rewardes are owynge to so strong a fayth, and vndoubtedly God, who is bothe rightuous and bountefull, will truly paye them, but in tyme conuenient. Nowe is the tyme to fight, hereafter the crownes shalbe gyuen. In the meane season ye haue nede of patience to thetent that after ye haue constauntlye obeyed the wyll of God, ye maye receaue the crowne of euerlastyng glorie promysed you.

For ye haue nede of patience, that after ye haue doon the wyll of god, ye myght receaue the promise. For yett a very litle whyle, and he that shal come, will come, and will not tary. But the iust shal lyue by fayth. And if he withdraue hymselfe, my soule shal haue no pleasure in hym. It is not we that withdraue our selues vnto damnacion, but we parrayn vnto fayth, to the wyppynge of the soule.

The text.

As yett the daye is not come when that after batayle taken awayne and ended the rewardes shalbe gyuen: howbeit it is not farre of: And our Emperour, who when he ascended vp into heauen promysed that he would retourne vnto vs agayne, wyll come, and not longe tarye. In the meane while the tryghuous shal lyue by his fayth, be he neuer so much afflicted, neuer so much lawghed to shorne, neuer so muche deade, yett by hoppyng for the promyses shal he byholde his constaunt mynde. Howbeit if he abyde not styll in fayth, but thowme extreme desperation withdraue hymselfe from the profession of the ghospell, in him my soule shal have no pleasure. But God forbydde that by reason of our mistruste, we withdraue our selues from good begynnynges vnto damnacion. Yea rather we haue professed fayth, and therein wyll we contynue, to thetent we may wyne the lyfe and saluation of our soule, accordyng vnto the counsell of Clape, sayng: The tryghuous shal lyue by fayth.

The ii. Chapter.

Fayth is a sure confydence of thynges which are hoped for, and a certainte of thynges which are not sene. For by it the clercs obeyed a good report. Through fayth we vnderstande that the worlde was ordeyned by the wyse of god, and that thynges which are sene, were made of thynges whiche were not sene. By fayth Abell offered vnto God a more

The text.

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The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

more precious sacrifice then Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, god testifying of his gifts: by which also he being dead, yet speaketh.

There is nothing that so greatly bringeth good men into fauour of God, as faith and sure beleefe on God. For it is an argument of a mynde which hath conceived the best opinion & maye be of God; to doubt nothing of his wordes, though the same appeare no where to the senses of man, nerther can be proued by mannes reason. The comon sort of men iudge those thynges bayne, & mosse lyke vnto dreames whiche where they be nowhere in dede, are only concyued of the mynde by hope, & thinkeith it an extreme folye to beleue that suche thynges are true as can in no wise be shewed vnto the eyes. Certes this sayth whereby the ryghtiouse man lyueth when o- ther do perishe, is not a certayne comon lyght beleefe, but a substantiall and sure foundation of those thynges whiche can not be perceyued nerther by the senses, nor argumentacions of man: neuerthelesse sure hope so representeth the same vnto the mynde and soule, as though they were manifestly sene, and holden with the handes, and persuaedeth those thynges whych of themselves are inuisible, to be mosse certayne and sure, not by mannes reasons, but by a sure beleefe towarde God the authour thereof. The Jewes put confydence in there workes, but this is the onely thing which maketh vs alowed & well beloued of God, & not vs alonely, but furthermoze yf a man will make reherfall from the creation of the worlde, he shall fynde that all oure forefathers and elders, who are muche remembred for there laudable vertue and godlynes, deserued that they attended to by reason of their commendable sayth.

First of all, are we not bounden vnto sayth that we haue sure perceurance that all this whole worlde with all thynges therein conteyned was created with the worde of God, and the onely commaundement of the maker: for who is able otherwysse to perswade, that of inuisible thynges were created & made thynges visibler: or els that thynges which are, were made of thynges which are not? The philosophers reasonynge as men, supposed & the world was neuer made, neither had any begynnyng moze then had the workeman and creatour hym selfe. But this which could neither be sene, ne can be proued by argumentacion of mannes witte, we do as firmly beleue as though we sawe it, ascertayned by holy scripture, which declareth that the world was made by the commaundement of God, who (as we know right well) is able to do all thynges, and can not lye. Abell first of all men deserued to haue the name of a righteous manne, and was therefore the moze to be prayed, because not being prouoked by the example of any other, he was innocente and saythfull to godward. But what thing was it that made him more dearly beloued of God then his brother Cayne? Forsooth faith, whereby he wholly hanged of him, whereas Cayn lyke a man saythlesse, and not contented with those thynges which the earth brought forth of her owne accord, for the fede of innocency, telled the ground. They both offered sacrifices vnto God of their owne propre goodes, but God onely accepted the sacrifice of Abell, because the innocent man trusted to his goodnesse with a true harte, and gaped not after the commodities and profites of this world, but hoped for a rewarde of his vertuousnes in heauen. Therefore he deserued not by his sacrifice, but thorow sayth, that almyghtie God indyngning his gyftes, dyd

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by hye sent down from heauen testifie that he was rightuous, and by reason of this most goodly testimonie, he is now after so many thousand yeares so much renowned and spoken of, of all menie, that beyng deade he cometh euen to liue and spake. He was slayne to his brotherwarde what tyme he was murdered faulelesse, but he was not sleine to God, vnto whome his bloude as yet cryed vengeance from the earth.

By faith was Enoch translated, that he should not se death, neither was he founde: For God had taken hym away. For afoze he was taken away he obtained a good report, that he pleased God. But without faith it can not be that anye man should please hym. For he that cometh to God, must beleue that God is, and that he is a rewarder of the that feare hym. The text.

Neither was it any whit prejudiciall vnto godlye Enoch that he was begotten of a wyched father. For holpe scripture wytnelleth of hym that he was conuersant & familiar wth god, euen whē he lyued in earth, because he pursued by faith, not those thinges which are sene, but such thinges as are not sene & is to wytte, eternall thinges & heuenlye: & for this cause he was taken by aliue to those thinges that he loued, & deliuered fro death. For he liued after such a sort before he was taken from the felowshyppe of men, that he seemed rather to lyue in heauen then in earth, and seemed also vnworthye to dye for that he hadde committed nothynge death worthye, to thentent men shoulde firste learne by his example, that the open way to immortalitie is by faith and innocēt lyuing. Therefore he was taken awaye because he pleased God. But he pleased hym chiefly by faith, without the whiche no man pleaseh hym, haue he els neuer so many good dedes. For whosoener desyeth to be brought in fauour with almyghtye God, must first of all beleue that God is, who can do all thynges, and wylleth what is best. Then muste he also beleue that God careth for the world, and that by hym neither the godly, whiche setting at noughte the visible good thynges of this world seache after God inuisible, are defeated of their rewardes, be they neuer so muche afflicted and persecuted in this lyf: neither the wicked persones shall lacke their punishmentes, although they seme here to lyue in prosperitie and haue the world at will. Therefore Enoch maye thanke his faith for this (I wote nere whether I maye call it gloze or felicitie) that he is taken awaye from the felowshyppe of men, and lyueth with God.

By faith Noe, being warned of God, eschued the thynges which were as yet not sene, and prepared the ark to the saving of his household, through the which arke he condemned the world, and became heire of the righteousnes which is according to faith. The text.

Howbeit Noe shewed a more notable example of faith towardes God, euen then this, who when he was forewarned by the mouth of God, howe it shoulde come to passe that all kyndes of lyving creatures in earth shoulde be destroyed thorow inundation of waters, and sawe no apparent argumentes or reasons wherby the saying of God mought be proued, because the element was fayre and cleare, and the people that were feasting & making bydeales without any care laughted to heare these manassynge wordes of the prophecie: Yet surely beleuing that it would so come to passe as God had sayde before it should happē, ordered an Arke, wherby he both preserved his own household, & cōdēd other mē which so mistrusted & wozydes of god, & they laughted hym

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to skorne as a madde man when he was a stranger the sayde Abhe agaynst the commynge of the floude. Neyther was he aloneely preferred from the floude, but also succeeded in the prayse of Abell and Enoch his elders, who are muche tenowmed for that rightuousnesse whiche theyowe faith maketh a man commendable before God.

The text.

By faith Abraham when he was called, obtayned to go out into a place, wherby he shoulde a ffarther receyue to inherytaunce: and he went out not knowing whether he shoulde go. By faith he remoued into the lande of promise, as into a ffarang cōtreie, when he had dwelt in tabernacles: & so byd Isaac & Jacob verree with him of the same promise. For he looked for a citie hauing a foundation, whose builder & maker is god.

Nowe howe ofte byd Abraham geue an example of a notable faith towards God: first where as there is nothyng moze pleasant to man then hys natyfe cōtreie, yet when almyghty God comaunded hym to forsake the same with his affections, and flyt into an vknowne lande, he made no tarryng, but obeyed streight wayes the voyce of God, and that prouoked by no other mans example, nor put in hope and comforte by any probable reasons, how it shoulde so come to passe, that after he had forsaken suche landes and patrimonie as he was bozne vnto, he shoulde possesse by inheritaunce, I wot nete what lande, wherof as yet he neyther knewe the name, nor situation. So sure a truste and belefe had he, that all shoulde come to passe what so euer God had promysed. It proceeded of the same faith that when he came into the lande promysed of God, and the matier went not ffarwarde to hys mynde neyther wryth hym, nor his sonne Isaac, nor his nephew Jacob (where as yet then inheritaunce of thys lande was not promysed to him alone, but also to his offspring and posterite) because he was constrained oftentimes to fyght with his enemyes, and Isaac had muche busynes and trouble with the Philistians, and Jacob was dyscūthence by Elau his brother into the cōstrey of Mesopotamia, fro whence after he was at the length retourned agayn, he was fayne to bye a litle pece of ground to pytche his paullion in: yet all these thynges moued not Abraham a whyle to haue any dystrust in God, who promysed the lande: neyther complained he that he was a banyshted man, and not an inheritor, neither regarded he those thynges whiche are sene in earth, but heauenly thynges whiche are not sene o- therwise then w the eyes of faith. For he perceiued that this was not the lande that God meante of when he made the promes, the whiche lande he set so lytle store by, that he thought it not necessari therin to buyld neither house or towne but kepe hymselfe and his, in tabernacles, as a straunger whiche anon shoulde remoue to an other place. What byd he then loke for when he sawe that these promyses were not perfourmed: forsoothe he looked for an other citie whiche was stable and perpetual, from whence he shoulde netier be dyscūth out againe, farre vnyke these cyties whiche men do buyld and destroye, the maker and buylder wherof was God hymselfe.

The text.

Through faith Sara also receiued strength to conceiue and be with child, and was deliuered of child when she was past age, because she iudged hym faithfull wherby had promised. And therfore sprang there of one (euen of one whiche was as good as deade) so many in multytude, as are starrs of the heaue, and as the sand the which is by the sea more innumerable.

Forreouer

Mayrouer his wyfe Sara when she had bothe an olde man to her husband, and her selfe was so stricken with age, that her matrice lacked natural strength to drawe mannes seede vnto it, and retayne the same, dyd neuerthelesse conceiue, and was deliuered of Isaac, mistrusting the strength of nature, but yet giuing credence vnto God, who by an aingell prompted her a man childe the nexte yeare. She gaue no care to nature reclaiming and barking to the contrarie, but onely had a sure beleefe that God coulde not lye. God promised Abraham a posteritie equall in nombre to the starrs, and the sande of the sea shore, and yet by the course of nature was there no hope of yssue at all. That notwithstanding, he had no mistrust. And therfore of this one olde man beinge barayne by reason of age, there yssued a posteritie so many in nombre, as are the starrs of the heave, and the sande in the sea shore. For he looked for sonnes and nephewes, not after the kynde of blood, but after the imitation of faith, wherby al we are the offsprynge and posteritie of Abraham, whiche do beleue the promises of the gospel. Therfore not onely Abraham, but also all his true posteritie were of such a constant faith, that very death bereaued not them thereof.

These all liued according to faith when they had not receyued the promises: but saith the Lord a facot, and beleued them, and saluted them, and confessed that they were straungers and pilgrymes on the earth. For they that say such thinges, declare that they seek a countrey. Also if they had bene mynibeful of the countrey, from whence they came out, they had leasure to haue returned agayne: but now they desire a better (that is to saye) an heavenly. Wherefore God hymselfe is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a cytie.

The text

For all these dyed when they as yet had not the promysse performed, but saue them a farre of by faith, and beleued them: and for greate desyre saluted them, puttyng so lytle trust in this lande, wherem no man maye lyue anye long space, that they confessed them selves straungers and pilgrymes, not onely in Palestine, but in the whole worlde. For oftentimes they call this lyfe a pilgrimage and straunge dwellyng. And Dauid in the myssicall Psalm confesseth hymselfe to be a pylgryme on the lande as all his forefathers and elders were, and yet reigned he in Palestine, and builded there a citie. And verely this countrey y was compassed about with very narrowe limites, and a great parte thereof came not to the possession of the Hebrewes the offsprynge & successors of Abraham, because they coulde not drive out the olde possessors: neyther dyd Shoyles entre into the same, but behelde and saluted it a farre of from a mountayne, when he was aboute to passe out of the worlde, and yet had he no mistrust of the promysse. Therefore sence they confesse themselves to be pylgrymes, they sufficiently declare that they desyre and long for a countrey. What countrey like they after vnto whom all this worlde is an exile and banishment? They forsoke their countrey of Chaldee, the whiche, if they had so sore longed for it, was not so farre of, but that they myghte haue had conueniente recourse thider at pleasure. Therefore they longed not for that, but for an other countrey better then it, wherin they myghte liue for euer, quite exempte and deliuered from all greuous sorowes and paynes of this wretched worlde. This was that heavenly countrey, into the whiche God called them out from their owne, for the loue wherof he willed them so to lyue in this worlde, as though they were not therein. And for this cause almyghtie God, where he is the maker & fourtaigne Lorde of all men, calleth hymselfe specialy the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

For he is properly the God of those that haue put their whole trust, and all aydes of felicitie in him. And vnto suche hath he prepared, not an earthly, but a celestiall citie in the whiche they reygne alwayes in blysse with him, for whose sake they contemned all thynges.

The text.

By faith Abraham offered vp Isaac when he was proued, and offered hym being his only begotten sonne, in whom he had receiued the promysse. And to hym it was sayd: in Isaac shall thy seede be called: for he considered that God was able to raptre hym vp agayn from death. Wherefore receiued he hym also for an ensample of the resurrection. By faith vpd Isaac blest Jacob and Esau, concernyng thynges to come.

Was not this also a notable example of fayth in Abraham: that when God tryeng howe vnfaignedly he trusted hym, commaunded hym to offce vp in sacrifice his sonne Isaac, where as he was hys onely sonne, and he in whose name the posteritie was promysed (for these were the wordes of the promysse: Thy seede shall be called in Isaac) yet he without further delaye vpd as he was comaunded to do, not reasonyng here with himselfe on this wise: Of whom shal I haue posteritie if I slep hym in whom onely resteth all the hope of my posteritie? But he considered this in his mynde, that God who made the promysse coulde not lye, and that he was able yf it pleased hym, to reyse his deade sonne the multiplier of his stocke euen from death: And because he beleued the resurrection of the dead, it was therefore gyuen him to byrnyng home his sonne agayne with him beyng as it were restored to lyfe, notwithstanding he was as much as in the father laye, dead, who euen then represented by a certayne figure the resurrection of Iesu Christe to come. This was also a manifest example of a mynde hauyng a great confidence in God, that when Isaac laye on hys death bedde, and had not as yet receiued the felicitie promysed of God, yet was he bolde to promysse the same to Jacob and Esau his somes, when he blessed the both, foreseeyng both theyr lyues, and the contrarie rewarde that eche of them shoulde haue. So quicke of syght is faith, that she seeth euen those thynges as present whiche are farre distant from the bodily senses.

The text.

By faith Jacob, when he was in dyng, blessed bothe the sones of Joseph, and bowed hym selfe toward the toppe of his scepter. By faith Joseph when he dyed, commaunded the departyng of the children of Israel, and gaue commaundment of his bones.

It came of lyke faith that Jacob at the hower of his death, blessed all the sonnes of Joseph, not ignorant what was to come, who crosseynge hys armes laped his right hande vpon Ephraim beyng on his left syde, and his lefte hãde vpon Manasse standyng on hys right syde, nothyng doubtyng but that woulde come to passe, which the holy ghost tolde him before shoulde happen. But this faithfull olde man saw a greate deale farther, what time he kyssinge the toppe of the sceptre of his sonne Joseph, worshipped Christe in hym, who shoulde haue soueraigne auctoritie & rule ouer all men, of whõ the said Joseph falsely accused & betrayed of his brethren bare the figure. Neither vpd Joseph growe out of kynde, & become vnlke his auncestours in faith. For when he shoulde departe this world in the land of Egypt, he foresawe how it shoulde come to passe by gods helpe (the whiche thing as then seemed nothing lykely) that the Israelites shoulde remoue out of Egypt to come vnto the lande promysed of God: and so true is it that he doubted not herof, that he gaue then a commaundment of the translating of his bones to the same place.

By

of S. Paule to the Hebrewes? Cap. xi. Fol. xxi.

By faith Moses when he was borne, was byd thre monethes of his father and mo: ther because they saw he was a proper chyldre, neither feared they the Kinges countenance.

Moreover Moses, when he was newly comen into the world was preserved by the faith of his parentes. For when the kyng had commaunded that all the men chyldren borne of the Hebrewes should streight wayes be done to death, his father & mother after they had viewed the chyldre (who seemed anon as he was borne to be marked to do some greate and notable feate, such by the vertue towardsnes and lykelyhod that appeared in his countenance) supposing it to be an acceptable pleasure unto God that it were preserved for the common weale of the people, contemned the kynges commaundement, & byd the sayde chyldre thre monethes in their house: that done, they put it in a lytle cofer, and layde it oute vpon a ryuers banke, nothyng doubting but God woulde preserve the poynglyng whom he had endued with so greate grace: to conclude, they feared moze to displease God then the kyng, because they perceyved that such as lyue well and vertuously, can not, howe soeuer they woulde go with them, lacke they rewardes.

By faith Moses when he was great, refused to be called the son of pharaons daughter, and chose rather to suffer aduersitie wth the people of god then to enioy the pleasures of synne for a season, and esteemed the rebuke of Christe greater riches then the treasures of Egypt. For he had respect vnto the reward.

The re.

Howbeit the parentes of Moses deserued to haue the prayse hereof, lyke as this was his owne propre commendation, that after he was thotte by towards maynes state, and chosen of pharaos dawghter to be her sonne, he refused the honourable kyndred of the bloud Royal, hauyng leuer to confesse him selfe to be an hebraue borne, & so to suffer comon persecution with the people of God, then by wyched dissimulation to enioy the commodities and pleasures of thys worlde, reckenyng it to be muche happier riches then all the Egyptians treasures, at that tyme to suffer the rebukes of aduersities for the preservation of the people, therby to figure Christ, who in tyme to come should suffer greater euels for the sauetye of his nation. Finallye he contemned that he myghte haue had, and was sure of, and with the eyes of faith regarded those thynges onely whiche are fatte from the senses, puttyng his assyaunce in God, who suffreth not the vertue and goodnes of mā, to be disapointed of worthy rewardes.

By faith he forsooke Egypt, & feared not the fiercenes of the kyng. For he endured, such as though he had sent him whych is inuisible. Through faith he ordeyned the passage and the effusion of bloude, lest he that destroyed the first borne, shoulde touche them.

The text.

The same Moses puttyng his trust in the ayde of God, boldly attempted thynges of muche greater enterpryse then these. For he stuck not to fyre oute of the lande of Egypt, and thence to conuey with him the people of God, nothyng fearing the wrath of the fierce tyrante. He contemned the kyng whom he sawe wth his eyes. He regarded not the threatnynges of so myghty a prince, whom he sawe in armes purpurnge his nation the Israelites at the heles, and readye to sleve them. Neyther did he with lesse boldnesse and courage of mynde trust vpon the inuisible socours of the inuisible God, then yf he had openly sent him with hys eyes. Moreover of the same faith came it, that when he understood howe it would come to passe, & the reuengyng Kingdome would raunge

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thorow the whole lande of Egypte, and they all the fyrst booke, he was nothing afrayde of his people the Hebrewes, vnto whom in those daies aboute the tyme of the same destruction, he ordeyned the annuall vse or ceremonie to eate the Paschall Lambe, with whose bloude they sprinkled the thresholde and haunse of the doore, with both the postes of the house, and trustyng vpon this sygne feared not them selues in the myddes of the daughter of the Egyptians.

The text.

By faith they passed through the red see as by drye lande, which when the Egyptians had assaied to do, they were drowned.

Then after when the red sea letted the Hebrewes in their speng, by vertue of lyke sayth it deuided asunder at the stroke of Moyses rodde, and lefte suche a waie in the myddes, that they passed thereby as wel as by drye lande. And by this meanes all the people puttynge their truste in God, fled awaie safe and without any harme. But when the Egyptians beeyng raffe and ouer haste thorow the waie, were entred therein, by and by the waters closed together, and they all were drowned.

The text.

By faith the walles of Jerico fell downe after they were compassed about seuen daies.

What thyng made in tymes passe the walles of Jericho, after they were seuen tymes compassed aboute, on the seuenth daie soeapely to fall without any violence of engins at the sounde of the puerles trompettes. At the crye or shoute of the people, in suche wise that all the Hebrewes who encompassed the towne, had entraunce made themeuery man in the place where he stode: was it not the faith of the capitayne Iosua and the people: he was thorowly perswaded with hym selfe that god was able to do all thynges, and that the thyng woulde vndoubtedly come to passe whiche he had promysed to do.

The text.

By faith the harlotte Raab percyued not with them that were disobedient, when she had receiued the spies to lodgyng peaceably.

Furthermoze, it was also a notable example of sayth that the harlotte Raab, whiche had before receiued the spies to lodgyng that were sent vnto the Citie by the Hebrewes, after she perceiued howe that people was dearely beloued and in the fauoure of God, she was better wyllynge to prouide for them with the daunger of her owne lyfe, then to get thanke of the wycked Citizens, and therefore had she this rewarde for her faith, that she and her familie onely were preserued fro death, because they shuld not perishe wth the, which trustyng to their own strength beleued not that god would destroye their Citie at his pleasure.

The text.

And what shall I more say: for the tyme wyll be to shortly for me to tell of Gedon, of Barache, and of Samson, and of Jephthah, of Dauid also & Samuell, & of the prophets: wher through sayth I shalld kingdome: wrought righteousnes: obtayned the promys: shopped the mouthes of lions: quenched the violence of fire: escaped the edge of the swerde, out of the wehemes, were made strong, were valiant in fight, turned to flight the armys of the alientes, the women receiued their dead raysed to lyfe agayne.

But sayng that among so many wonderfull actes of our forefathers and elders there was none at all notably achieved wthout the aide of faith, for what purpose shoulde I stande in the particuler reherfall of them all: I shoulde sooner lacke tyme, then examples if I would go forth with the stories of the Capitayne Gedon, who trustyng vpon the aydes of God feared not with three hundred men to set vpon the hooke of the Chanaanites exceedingly wel furnished
then

And with men, armoure, and all other habilimentes of warre: And in conclusi-
on dyscomfited and put to flyght a great multitude of them, with the sound of
troumpettes, noyse of pychers, and inuictiuous and sobayne appratynge of
candels, in such wyse that the Hebrues neuer drawyng their swerdes, one of
them slewe an other.

Of Barache, who trustyng vpon the prophete of the woman Debora, set
vpo the credyngly well appoynted hooste of the Captayne Selara, and slewe
the same not leauyng one man aliu, and finally put kynge Iabin to flight, who
anon after was slaine of a woman.

Of Sampson, who beyng ayded with the helpe of God achyued manye
wonderful enterpryses against the Philistians, for the defence of his countrey;
the whiche coulde not be done of a greate manye together, no; yet by any pul-
saunce and strength of mannes bodie.

Of Jephthae, who albeitt he was a vile bastard, and of base fortune in his
countrey, yet trustyng vpon Goddes helpe had a inuictiuous goodly victorie
ouer the Ammonites enmyes to his people.

Of Dauid, who besydes so many victories by Gods helpe gotten, besydes
so many treperdies as he escaped by the preservation of almighty God, feared
not beyng but a younge scyrling, and wythout armoure, to encountre wyth
Goliath well weaponed and armed at all pices, whom he ouerthrewe with the
stroke of a styng, because God shoulde haue the whole gloze and prayse of this
victorye and not man.

Of Samuell, who withoute anye garde of men to defende his personage;
gouerned many yeares the people of Israell, freely executynge the office of a
Iudge and chief ruler among them, beyng well assured that God woulde re-
warde, yf any man dyd any thyng aright in his ministracion. Come (I saye)
would sayle me yf I would procede in recityng of al such exaples. I will here
ouerthyp so many noble Prophetes, as puttyng the; trust in God set naught
by the threatynnges of tyrantes: so many men of renowned holynes as not by
worldly goodes & riches, but by the ayde of god in who they put their whole af-
faynce dyd wonderfull dedes, & by the; worthy actes left behynde the a memori-
al of the; liues vnto posteritie. For, to make a bryef & sumarie rehearsal of stoyes
omittynge the names of thauctours, it is to be ascribed vnto the; sayth & they
beyng as touchyng all other thynges vnable, dyd by the helpe of God subdue
most wealthie and riche kyngdomes, and coulde not by any manner of feare be
brought from the keepyng of the lawe that was geuen them, tokyng for the; re-
ward of almyghtie God. And because no delayyng of the promyses minished
their sayth, at length they attayned those thynges whiche God promysed vnto
their elders. They obteyned of him by faithfull prayers that whiche coulde in
no wyse be done by the course of nature. They were by his preservation deli-
uered from credyng greate daungers. The Lyons whiche agaynst other are
of fiercenesse inuincible, they either vanquished, or proued harmles, as though
their mowthes beyng stopped, or els their claws faste bownden, they had had
no power to hurt those whom God would haue preserved without anye ay-
aunce. When they were cast into the myddes of the fyre, they so endured with-
oute hurt, as though they had quenched the naturall violence and heate ther-
of with their bodyes. Agayne, by the protection of God they escaped awaye
safe from their enemyes swerdes that were drawen agaynst them. Further-

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more God recomfortyng them, they receyued after bitter desperation, exceeding greate strength and courage of mynde, insomuche that beyng not longe before taken for dead men, they sodaynly acquitted them selues manfully in battayll, & valiantly put to flight their enemies, of whom they were invaded. Whosoever the faith also of the women deserued that the mothers sawe their deade childzen reyled from death to lyfe agayne.

The text.

Other were racked, and woulde not be belieued, that they myght inherite a better resurrection. Agayne other were tried with mockynges and scourgynges, mozeouer, with bondes and prysonment, were stoned, were hewen asunder, were tempted, were slayne with swoerd, walked vp and downe in shepe skynnes, & goates skynnes, bring bristure, troubled and beread, whiche men the world was not worthy of: They wandred in wildernesses and in mountaynes, and in denyes, & caues of the earth.

Other beyng racked, and sore handled with diuerse kyndes of tourmentes, were better wyllyng to be in suche paynes, then to be deliuered with conditi- on to obeye the wycked commaundementes of Dynces: yeldyng with greate fapth they: lyues to almyghty God, whiche they knew tyght wel they shoulde receyue agayne with vantage in the resurrection of the deade, supposyng it muche better to be immortalitie with the losse of this shorte and transitorie lyfe, then for a lytle gayne of small tyme to loose the lyfe eternall. Agayne by reason of a constant desyre they had to magnifye the truth and rightuous- nes, they were testyfyng Rockes to all the world, laughed to skorne of euery bodye, and slandered for madde menne, and workers of myschief, and not on- ly put to shame for they: faith towards God, but also had their vertue and goodnesse tryed with scourgynges, and mozeouer with bondes and emprison- ment. Furthermoze they were stoned, hewen a sonder, and towe in peces with horrible punishmente of bodye. To make an ende, with what kynde of euyls were they not tryed with al: They dyed with dynt of swerde, beyng fully per- swaded that good men coulde not by very death be seuered from God.

Agayne suche of them as chaunced not to make an ende of their tourmentes by death, wanne nothyng els by prolongyng of their lyues, but that they were tourmented with long martyrdomes. They were banished from their houses, and beyng dyspue out of townes wandred vp and downe in wyldernesse lyke wilde bestes, couered, as well as it woulde be, with shepe skynnes, and Goate skynnes, hauyng scarcitie of all necessities, vexed with the cruellnesse of perse- cutours ready to assaile them on euery syde, & troubled with the sondrye dis- comodities and miseries of this lyfe, beyng so vnworthy to suffre suche euyls and aduersities, that the world was rather not worthye to haue in it so vertuous and holy men: in suche wyse, that God moughte seme euen for this purpose to haue taken them away from the company of men, lest they beyng men of pure and chaste conuersation, shoulde haue ledde their lyues among despyled persons and synners. Therfore they wandered aboute in wyld mountaynes, hauyng no certayne habitacion or dwellyng place to refoyte vnto, vsyng Denyes and Caues of the earth in the steede of houses.

The text.

And these al thorow faith obtayned good report & receiued not the promyse, because god had prouided a better thing for vs: that they without vs, shoulde not be made perfecte.

And all these before named albeit they haue not yet obtayned the rewarde promysed them for their godly lyuyng, whiche rewarde shalbe geuen them at the generall resurrection of the bodyes: Yet haue they deserued perpetuall prayse for the constantnesse of their fapth. Some man wyl here saye: woe haue

hath not every man his rewarde by and by gyven him after death: For soothe it hath so pleased almyghty God, that all the whole bodye of Chryste shall receive the glozy of immortalitie together. For we are all membyres of the same bodye: and suche as have gone before vs do gladly tarpe for vs, to thende that they maye wholly and toynly with theyr bodyes, and all the felowshyppe of theyr byrthen, entre into thenheritance of eternal glozy, and be conioyned vnto their heade.

The.xii.Chapter.

Wherefore, let vs also (sepyng that we are compassed wyth so great a myltitude of synners) laye a waye all that plecth downe, and the synne that hange th so fast on, let vs run with patience vnto the battail that is set before vs, loking vnto Iesus p anchor and finisher of our faith, which (for the hope that was set before hym) abode the crosse & despised the shame, and is set downe on the right hande of the thyone of God. Consider therefore, howe that he endured suche speaking agaynst hym of sinners, lest ye shoulde be worried, & faint in your myndes. For ye haue not persistered vnto blaw, standing agaynst synne: And haue forgotten the exhortacion, whych speaketh vnto you as vnto children: saye sonne, despise not thou the chastyng of the Lord, neither sainte, when thou art rebuked of hym: for whom the Lord loueth hym he chastynerh: yea, he scourgeth every synner that he receyvethe,

The texts,



Thus then we are compassed with so great a compaignie, and as it were with a cloude of those, who, euen in the olde testamente, witnessed by sufferynge of suche euils as are before rehearsed that they beleued the promyses of God with all their harte, let vs also encouraged by their examptes see that we caste frome vs the burthen or fardell of corporall thynges and bodelye lustes, whiche letteth the mynde laden with cares to desyre thynges celestiall, and put awaye synne that helde vs faste on euer syde: and specially beyng incensed and set a fyre with the hope of heauenly thynges, runne manfully in this race that is set before vs, and by no afflictions, nor any withdrawynge of the mynde be stayed and holden backe from running the course that we haue begonne, neuer castyng our eyes asyde from Iesu Chryste, who as he is the verpe cause that we haue conceyued this belefe on God, so wyl he synpse what he hath begonne in vs. Let vs confidye what waye he entred in, and whitherto he came, who whercoas he myght by reason he was innocent and gyltlesse haue escaped death, and bene as much without all payne and passion, as he was without all synne, yet he despyrnyng the ioyes of this worlde suffred death, and to thentent his death shoulde be the greuouset haupyng reproche toyned therewith, he suffered the death of the crosse. For men make not so muche a doo to suffre a glorious death. Ye see whiche waye he entred in. shewe whitherto came he? By despyrnyng of this lyfe, he attained immortalitie: By despyrnyng and setting naught by worldly reproche, he attayned euerlastyng glozye in heauen, where he now sitteth on the right hande of the royall thyone of God the father.

When ye withall haue auauince youre selves to come to be partakers of this glorie thowre reproche and dyuerse paynful afflictions, then, lest you discouraged in your myndes shoulde at any tyme by thenforcemente of wearynesse ceaseto runne in the race that is sette before you, confidye with your selves how that youre capytayne, who neuer knewe anye manoure of synne, dyd neuer thelesse, to shewe vs an example of true patience, endure so greates rebukes, so

muche

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

anyche shame and bylance, suche mytrepoytes and falsc accusacions, that he let the wycked Jewes compell hym to suffre the very punysshment of the crosse. Be not ye therfore dysmayed, who brynge not cleane withoute synne: do suffre lesse dyspleasures and perlecution. Better it were for a man to dye a thousande tymes, then to fall agayne into his former synfull lyfe. Howbeit you, who haue hitherto suffred small perlecution and aduersitie, haue not as yet resisted synne vnto sheddyng of blood, the whiche synne fyrclye assaulteth you, stryunge agaynst it, and yet you do by and by suppose that God hath forsaken you, and remembre not what the mercypfull father speaketh vnto you as vnto his chyldren, in the mysticall prouerbes, comfortynge you, and with swete and gentle wordes exhortynge you to greate and valiaunte courage of mynde: *My sonne* (sayth he) despayse not thou the chastenynge of the Lorde: neither despaire thou when soeuer he rebuketh thee. For whom the Lorde loueth, him he chasteneth with the euils and aduersities of this lyfe, and scourgeth euery sonne that he receyveth.

The text.

If ye endure chastenynge, god offereth hymselfe vnto you as vnto sonnes. What sonne is he whom the father chasteneth not? If ye be not vnder correccion, wherof al are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sonnes. Therefore saynge we haue had fathers of our fleische, whiche correcte vs, & we gaue them reuerence: shall we now not much rather be in subiection vnto the father of spirites, & true? And they beely for a fewe daies nurtured vs, after theyr owne pleasure, but he nurturcth vs for our profyte, to the intent that he may bringe of his holines vnto vs. So inauer chastenynge for the present tyme seemeth to be tedious, but geuous: neuertheles afterwarde, it bringeth the quicke fruite of righteousness, vnto them whiche are exercised thereby.

If ye patiently endure such chastenynge, God acknowledgeth his sonnes, and offereth him selfe to you agayne as a mercypfull and louing father, & doeth not exclude you from the heritage of the lyfe celestial. Thynke you that you are therfore hated, and nothyng regarded of God, because ye are afflicted with the euils of this worlde? Nay, rather this ought to be an argument that ye are appoynted to be the heires of the fathers heritage. For what father is he that doeth not somewhyles chasten his sonne whom he acknowledgeth for his owne? furthermore, sith that all vertuose men and good lyuers, whom God epyther doth, or hath dearely loued, haue bene by temporall afflictions taughte true vertue, and godly lyuynge, yf you be free from suche fatherlye correccion, verely it is a manifest prooffe that ye are bastards, & not true natural sonnes. If we haue not onely suffred, but also giuen reuerence to oure parentes, of whome we are begotten as touchynge the fleische onely, whyles they dyd wryth checkes and lasses teache vs the comen behauiour of this lyfe, not stryunge agaynst theire auctoritie, but so interpreting their doynges, as though they holde vs, they dyd all of a frendely mynde, and good zeal towards vs: shall not we then muche moze submytte and yelde our selves to the heauenly father, who is not onely the auctour of bodyes, but of spirites, fullye perswaded with our selves herin, that what euils and aduersities so euer he suffereth vs to be afflicted withall, he doeth neuertheles with a fatherly mynde prouyde for our soule health and saluation? As the corporall father is not so cruell agaynst his sonne as to sleigh him, but to preserue him, and make him better: so God chaſteneth vs in this worlde to the intent we maye lyue for euer in the worlde to come. And those parentes instructed vs as they would them selves, oftentymes abusynge their auctoritie, and instructed vs for a shorte tyme in thynges

thynges transitorie, and suche thynges as wyll soone perishe, as in those which pecteyne to the gettinge and mayntenaunce of worldlye substance, yea and many tymes hauing an eye to their owne profite, they instructed vs to this ende, because they would be holpen with our obsequious and ready diligence. But this father who hath no neede of vs, alwayes regardeth our commodities, and that our singular profites and commodities.

For he goeth not aboute to haue vs enriched with earthlye goodes, nether to haue vs succede in the tyuelod of a fewe acres of lande, but to giue vs his heavenly gyses, that is to witte, holynesse in this world, and in the world to come euerylastyng blyss and felicitie. Whoso wyll earnestly consoide with hym selfe this so greate and excellent profite shall casely alwaye with the temporal grief of this present life. For when other parentes do correcte their chyldren, ymaner of chastyng hath in it no pleasure, but payne and grief for the tyme presente, yet after the chyldren be come to mannes state, and begynne once to perceiue howe muche good that payne dyd them, then do they greatly reioyce that euer they were beaten and chydde, and with laughyng countenaunce render them thanks whom they suffered befoze with wepyng eyes. Euen so the calamitie and miserie of this world is in the meane tyme whyles it hangeth ouer oure heades, and vexeth these mortall bodyes, greuous to oure senses. But this payne, this vexation and trouble, wherewith oure soules also by reason of the societie they haue with the body are dysquieted, byngeth forth the quier and swete fruite of rightuousnes in due season. Affliction teacheth godlynesse, godlines byngeth the topes of a good mynd or cleare conscience, a good mind byngeth forth immortallitie. Therfore lette no mannes hart sayle him in this most godly ranse. The swate and labour is greate, but the rewardes are hygh and excellent, but the rewarde gyuer is faythfull.

Stretche furthe therfore the handes which were lett byne, and the weake knees: se that ye haue straight steppes vnto your fere lest any halting turne you out of the waye: yea, let it rather be denied. Followe peace with all men & holynes: without the which no man shall se the Lord. And loke that no man be destitute of the grace of God, lest any roote of bytternesse sprynge vp and trouble, & thereby many be defiled: that there be no fornicator, or vnclens person, as Esau which for one meale of meate sold his birthright. For ye knowe how that after ward when he would by inheritance haue obteyned blessing, he was put by. For he founde no place of repentance, though he sought it with teares.

The text.

Followe you stout wasteflers, and lustye runners: bestyze youre wepye handes, plucke vp your weake and solterng knees, and runne strenght to the marke that is set befoze you. Let not the foote tounyng hither and thither wander out of the strenght waye: Yea rather yf you haue wandered anye whit at all, yf ye haue bene heretofore slacke in runnyng, see ye make amendes with a newe lustie courage and cherefulness. Neither is it ynough for you that euery man runne for his owne behofe takyng no care for other: yea rather be you so conioyned in peace and conorde, that by a comon diligence one of you be careful for an other, and take hede lest anye runnyng in this common course fall from the grace of God: lest any lackyng that holynesse whiche becommeth the membres of Christ to haue, and without whiche no man shall see God, be onceous vnto the bodye, and unworthy to haue the chiefe game or rewarde which is set befoze vs giuen hym: And finally lest anye roote of bytternesse sprynge vp, and trouble the godlye endeuours of other whiche hasten vnto heauenlye thynges: and beynng suffered to spread abrode defyle a greate manye with his infection.

The paraphrase of Erasmus byon the Epistle

infection. Let there be no fornication amonge you, or any person that is otherwise vnicane, and giuen vnto the bealy. For suche lestes and beastly desires do let you to runne, and cause you to tounce out of the ryghte waye, and thus cometh it to passe, that whyles you regarde suche coloured & apparent good thynges, ye loose that chiefe game and euerlastyng rewarde. So for a litle tyme chaunced it vnto Elau, who being hongrey solde his bythpyght for the pleasure of one meale of meate, purchasyng hymselfe perpetuall repentance for a small pleasure, that endured but a while. For this must you remember to content it maye be an example for you, howe that afterwarde when he wente aboute to haue his bythpyght restored vnto him agayne by his fathers blessing, he was put by, and was neuer y better for his late repentance, althoughe he testifed by greate abundaunce of teares that he was sorre for his deedes. That byttrenesse which springeth of hatred, enuie, and arrogancy, breaketh brotherly concord: pleasure of the bodye, superfluytie, and other desires of fleshy thynges do besyle pure and holy liuyng. Howe these two thynges, that is to witte concord and pure liuyng, must not decaye amonge you: Neither can the one of them be without the other. For amonge vnicane persones and synners, there is no concord wherewith God is pleased: neyther can there be any good and bypyght liuyng where as discord and debate rayneth. Therefore we ought also to take good hede lest we most folishly exchange the heretaintance of the kyngdome of heauen, with the pleasures of this worlde. The thynges wherunto we hasten are brautuly, wherfoze we muste come pure and cleane: we must continually walke in the lyght of the gospel. Sure helpe liuyng must agree with so holy a profession. You must nedes be answerable vnto your hye prync and his lawe in your conuersation.

The text.

For ye are not come vnto the mount that is fourth, and vnto burnyng fyre, nor vnto storme and darknes, and tempestes of weither, and sounde of a trompe, and the voyce of wordes, which voyce they (that heare it) willed alwaye, that the communication shoulde not be spoken to them: For they could not abide that which was commaunded. Yet a briefe touche the mountayne is shalbe shewed, or thurst thowse with a darte: so terrible was the syght wherby appeared, as I said: I feare & quake. But ye are come vnto the mount syon, and to the cytie of the liuyng god, the celestial Iherusalem: and to an unnumerable myght of anges: and to the congregation of the liue borne sonnes, which are wyrtten in trauers, & to god the iudge of all, and to the spirites of iust and perfecte men, & to Iesus the mediator of the new testamēt, and to the sprinkeling of the bloud that speaketh better then the bloud of Abel.

For ye are not come vnto the mount of syna, which maye be touched with bodye, as youre forefathers came once, what tyme Moses published the lawe: and vnto a burnyng fyre which is felte and perceyued with mannes senses, nor vnto a storme and darkenesse, and vnto tempestes of weither, and sounde of a trompe, all the which thynges are perceyued with the eares, and eyes: nor to the voyce of wordes, which although they myght haue bene hearde with mannes eares by reason they were pronounced with breath, and byd lytle or nothyng represent the true voyce of God, yet had they suche a spaciellie in them, that the people hearyng the terrible noyse of the same, were greatly afraide, and despyed almyghtie God that he would not him selfe speake anye more vnto them, but that Moses would with his voyce publyshe suche thynges as God had commaunded. It shoulde that voyce of God haue bene more scryble then the weaknesse of mannes eares had bene able to alyue with all. Suche a reuerende feare and drede had those thynges which were done

done onely to figure the lawe of the gospel, that the people was kepte a lofe, & not suffered to touche the mounte, & also a proclamation made by commande- ment, that what beast soeuer touched the same Should be stoned, or thrust thro- rowe with a dart. For so terrible was the sight of the thynges which were shew- ed vnto the corporall senses, & Moyses himselfe was abashed, & quaked for feare thereof. Howbeit you are not come to linche a sensible sighte, whiche was a shadowe and figure of farre better thynges, but to thynges & haue in the more verttie then is conteyned herin, forasmuche as they are perceived with & inward or soule, & not with bodily senses: Ye are come, I saie, to the spirituall mounte of Syon which is touched with the spirit, & not with handes: to heauenly Je- rusalem the Citie of the lyving God wher is peace endurasing: to an innum- erable syght of angels the heade peeres & inhabitants thereof: to the con- gregation of the chyldren of god who haue not lost their byrthright with Esau, but by cleaupnge vnto Christe haue desired to be registered in heauen where they are made citizens: to God the iudge of all, who is the soueraigne perso- nage of that common wealth: to the spirites and soules of righteous men, who for their persite godlynes and good lyvinge are ioyned to the companye and felowshipp of heauen, and associat with the iudge: to Iesus the hie priest of the newe testament who doth not destroy vs, but restore vs vnto fauour: & to his blood by whose sprayng soules are purged & whiche speaketh better then the blood of Abel. For & blood desired vengeance: but this obteyneth pardon.

Be that ye despyse nor hym, that speaketh. For if they escaped not, which refused him that spake on earth, muche more shall we not escape, yf we runne awaye from hym, that speaketh from heauen, whose voice then spake the earth, and now hath declared, saying: yet once more will I shake, not the earth onely, but also heauen. Where as he saith: yet once more, it signifieth the remouinge awaye of those thynges, whiche are shakyn, as of thynges which haue ended their course: that the thynges, whiche are not shakyn maye remayne. Wherefore, yf we receiue the kyngdom whiche can not be moued, we haue grace wherby we may so serue God and that we may please hym with reuerence & godly feare, For our God is a consuming fire.

The text.

The more mercifully & louingly his blood speaketh for vs, the more oughte we to beware lest we despyse him who speaketh so for vs. For if they escaped not punishment for despying of the word, who refused Moyses a man speakyng on earth, then shall we suffer muche greuouser punishment yf we tourne awaye from Christ speakyng vnto vs from heauen, whose voice then spake the earth, to feare them by sensible feare from synnyng. But what threatneth he now to do from heauen by the prophet Aggeus: yet once more, sayeth he, will I shake, not the earth only, but also heauen, to the entent & not only earth- ly men, but also heauenly thynges maye quake & feare. Now where he sayeth: yet once more: it signifieth the remouyng awaye of those thynges which are shakyn, of such thynges, I saie, as are made with mens handes, as the temple, and citie of Jerusalem, to shewe that those thynges which are not made with mens handes, & therfore inasmuche as they are eternall can not be shakyn, maye contynue. The Jewes do glory & take pride in their temple, they glory in their holy citie, but the time shall come when these thynges shal not be. They loke after a kyngdome, but we see it translated and remoued to an other place. Let vs therfore who thorow the benefite and grace of the holy gost haue begonne to endeavour our selves to attayne the kyngdome of heauen (the whiche can in no wyse be shakyn) perseuer in the benefite of almyghtie God.

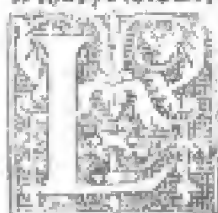
The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Let vs continue in this heavenly temple, & serue God with suche reuerence and feare, that we may with puritie of minde and conscience please him, who requi-
reth not from hence forth any other kinde of sacrifice. If our forefathers were
afearde to do any thyng whyles they were making of their sacrifices wherewith
they should offend the eyes of men: how much more hede the ought we to take in
these spirituall sacrifices lest we do any thyng whiche maye offende the eyes of
almyghtie God. If in tymes past he were in daunger who came vnto the holy
places without due obseruation of certayne ceremonies: how much greater pe-
ryll then shall we be in yf we presume to come with vncleane myndes vnto
God, who is not a bodely fyre (the which as it is kyndled, so may it be quenched
agayne) but a fyre ful of strengthe and efficacie, and also suche a one as byyn-
geth to nought and destruction what thyng soeuer it lusteth.

¶ The .xiii. Chapter.

Let brotherly loue continue. Be not forgetfull to lodge strangers. For thereby haue
diuerse men lodged angels vntowares. Remember them that are in bondes, euen as though
ye were bound with them your selues. Be mercifull of them which are in aduersitie, as
ye whiche are yet in the body. Wherelike is to be had in honor among all men, and the bed
vnderlyed. As for whozekepers and aduoutrers God shall iudge them. Let your conuer-
sation be without couetousnes, & be content with suche thynges as ye haue already. For
he hath sayd: I will not faile the neither forsake the: so that we may boldly say: the Lord
is my helper, and I will not feare what man maye do vnto me. Remember them whiche
haue the oversight of you, whiche haue spoken vnto you the wordes of God, whose sayth
is that ye followe, and consider the ende of their conuersation.

Heb. xiii.



Let brotherly loue continue among you, sens that ye are mem-
bres of the same bodye. Loue ye not suche onely as are daylye
conuersant with you, but also those whiche resorte as strau-
gers vnto you. For hospitalitie is highlye commended before
God, in so much that herebye Abraham deserued to receiue vn-
towares Angels to lodging when he thought he had done that
good tourne and pleasure vnto men. Furthermore Christen charitie requirerh
also this, that the calamitie of suche as are in prison and bondes for the profes-
sing of Christe moue you no lesse then if your selues were in lyke case: and that
their torment and payne (who are elssewile afflicted with diuerse euils and ad-
uersities) so stirre you to pittie and compassion, that it maye herebye appeare
that you haue a bodye subject to the selfe same euils, and are not compassion-
lesse for those paynes and sorowes whiche the membyres of the same bodye do
suffre. Let wedlocke, the whiche beyng kept as it oughte to be had due ho-
nour, euen among the heathen people, be likewise had in honour and reuerence
among you: and let not the bed of matrimonye be defiled with any kind of ad-
uoutry. As for whozekepers & aduoutrers God shall iudge the. Let your con-
uersation be without couetousnes, in such wise that you maye contente your sel-
ues with such thynges as you alreadye possesse, as menne liuing without pro-
uision and care for any thyng to come. For god made such a promise vnto Jo-
sue, & in Josue to al that put their confidence & trust in him: I wil not faile the,
saith he, neither forsake the: so that trusting on him, we maye boldly saye as the
prophet saith in the mysticall psalme: The lord is my helper, I will not feare
what man maye do vnto me. Regarde you those that haue the oversight of you, of
whom you haue receiued, not mannes doctrine, but the worde of God, and
see that they lacke nothing necessarie for them, vnto whose wordes lyke as at
the beginning you gaue credence, so loke vpon their leuynge as on a marke,
and folowe their faith, considering how constauntly they abyde in the profes-
sion of

tion of the gospell vnto their lyues ende. The gospell once taughte a righte, is alwayes most stedfastly to be holden and obserued.

Iesus Christe yester dawe, and to dawe, and the same continueth for euer. We not cased aboute with diuerse and strange scrupyle. For it is a good thyng that the heart be dayly fed with grace, not with meates, whiche haue not profited them that haue had the The text. pasture in them. We haue an aulter wherof they maye not eate whiche stonde in the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beastes whose bloude, is broughte in to the holy place by the high priest to pouрге sinne, are burnt without the tentes. Therfore I esue also to sanctifie the people with his owne bloude suffered without the gate. Let vs go furthe therfore vnto hym out of the tentes, and suffer rebuke with hym. For hee haue us no continuing cite: but we seeke one to come.

For as Iesus Christ was yesterdawe, and is to dawe, and euermore shalbe tyme without ende, and neuer shalbe chaunged: so shall his doctryne continue for euer. Therefore abyde you stable and stedfast therin, and be not as meane, leaping vpon no sure foundation, carped aboute with newe and diuerse learning. The lawe of Moyses taughte no other thyng then the gospell nowe teacheth, but after an other fashion. It is a poynte of folly to sticke styll vnto shadowes, after that vertue is come to lyght. And yet are there some which renewe agayne the olde iewyshe religion nowe abrogate and dysanulled, holding opynion that vertue and godlye lypunge standeth in meates and corporall fode, the whiche thynges such as haue superstitiously obserued, haue nothing profited thereby to thair awyng of cyghuousnesse. Whoso despyeth to attayne perfyte and true godlynesse, which hath not an onely shadowe of cyghuousnes, but stablysheth the mynde with a cleare conscience before God: lette hym continew in grace and fayth, and leane vpon this foundation whiche Christe hath layde, and then shall he not wauer with Jewyshe superstitions. At the Jewes counthe it a holy thyng to absteyne frome certayne meates, euen frome suche as are offered vpon sacrifice. We also haue a muche holper aulter, wherof it is not lawfull for them to eate, who beyinge gyven as yet vnto the ceremonies of the lawe, knowe not the grace of the gospel, wherby is gyven true soule health and saluation. For, accordyng vnto the prescription of the law, the carcases of those beastes whose bloude is accustomedly offered for synne by the high priest in the tabernacles called holy, are by commaundement burned withoute the tentes, as though the bloude had in it some holy thyng, notwithstandinge the bodies, as thynges uncleane and despyled, are carped out to be burned in unholye places, and therefore they absteyne from them, as from uncleane meates. These folkes haue the shadowe, but we embrace that which the shadowe hath signified. They were neuer the holier in mynde after they were sprynkled with bloud, neither were they any whit the cleaner because they absteyned from eatyng of þe bodies, sens their soules were wholly dysteyned w synne & viciousnes. We embrace Iesus our sacrifice & his priest, who, as it were alluding to the figure of the lawe, would be crucified without the gate of the cite of Ierusalem, there to pouрге his people with his most precious bloude, whose example we must not superstitiously, but deuoutely folowe. And this shall we do, yf we also take vp our crosse, & folow him goyng out fro the companye of men, as fro a knot or fellowship of uncheyuous persons. Let vs likewise go out, & departe fro mealyng with this world, & take more pleasure to suffice reproch for Christes sake, then to take þe fention of worldly glory. Let vs byd this earthly cite fare well, who haue not here a continuing cite, but loke after one to come, whiche is celestiall and euerlastyng.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Merely he goeth out of the citie, who so putteth awaye and subdueth thaffections and lustes of the fleshe, and wholye giueth himselfe to heauenlye contemplation.

The xxxiij.

By hym therefore do we offer sacrifice of laude alwaies to God, that is to saye: the fruite of those lippes, which confess his name. & do good & so desire: forget not for with suche sacrifices God is pleased. Obeye them that haue the ouersight of you, and submit your selues vnto them, for they watch for your soules, such as they that must giue accomptes: that they maye do it with ioye, & not with griefe. For that is an vnprofitable thinge for you.

We offer not by our sacrifice within the walles, but goe in lyke manoure out of the citie with oure hye priest Christe, and continuallye offer & certayne sacrifice pleasaunt and acceptable vnto God thow we hym, not any beast, nor come of the fildes, but the fruite of lippes, of lippes, I saye, not alondlye of the bodie, but also of the soule by the whiche we acknowlege the benefites of God towards vs, and haunge Christes crosse in remembraunce, rende thanks for the remission of oure synnes, and so manye graces as we are endued with all. Of this auiter the Jewes are not partakers, who abyde still within the walles, and loue nothing but that whiche is carnall. Nowe learne you also an other kynde of sacrifice, worthy to be a sacrifice of the gospell, whiche we muste continually make to please almyghtie God with all.

Oure neyghboure is to beholpen with our benefites, and yf the same be in necessity, then ought we to succour him with theaide of our goodes and substance. For by suche sacrifices goddes fauour is sooner obteyned, then by the trisping obseruaunces and constitucions of the Jewes, without regarde of our christis an brother. Obey you those whiche haue the ouersight of you, submitte your selues vnto them, althoughe they be euell persons, so long as they go not aboute to enforce you to vngodlynesse. For when they doe accorde to their office and vocation, they watche for your soules inasmuche as they prouide for your soule health and saluation, and that with their owne perill, bycause they shall giue an accomptes of their ministration vnto almyghtie God, from whome all power cometh. You shall greatlye ease them of their burthen, yf you shewe your selues obsequious and obedyent vnto them, to theentente that what so euer they do, they maye doe it with righte good will and gladly, rather then with euill will and grudgong. For that is bothe greuous vnto them, and also vnto you vnprofitable. It greuenh them that they haue taken so muche payne without any profite. On thother syde, it is not expedient for you to prouoke goddes wyath agaynst you, thow we your dysobedience.

The xxxv.

Praye for vs. For we trust we haue a good conscience among all men, & desire to lyue honestly. But I desire you the more, that ye so do, that I maye be restored to you the soone. The God of peace that brought agayne from death our Lord Jesus the greaie shepherd of the shepe through the bloude of the euerylastig testamēt, make you perseuer in al good workes, to do his will & bying to passe, that the thing whiche ye do, maye be pleased in his syght through Jesus Christ. To whom be prayse for ever while & worlds endures Amen.

Praye ye vnto God for my brethren and me. For (as it semeth) I ought to be nombred among your good pastours and byshoppes. Whether I be allowed of all men or no, I cannot tell, yet I trust I haue demeaned my selfe as honestly

honestie and good conscience woulde amonge all those which are desirous to lyue after the rule of the gospell. And this do I the more earnestly desyre you to do, to the intent I maye the soner be restoyred vnto you agayne. In the meane season I lyke wyse praye for you, that it maye please God thauentour of peace which hath rayled agayne from death that chiefe shepheerd and pastour of his shepe our Lorde Iesus Christe, who when he was retyred entred into heauen thoro'we his bloude, there to make intercession for vs, vnto the father, with the which bloude he hath hallow'ed the newe and euerclastyng testamēt: I praye for you (I say) that it maye please him to make you perseuer in all good workes, to the intent you maye satisfie and accomplyshe his will, and that it maye further please him to bring to passe that the thinge which ye do maye be pleasaunt and acceptable in his sight, and that thoro'w his sonne Iesus Christ, who is alwayes present and setteth forth our sacrifices: vnto whom all glorie is due, not onely in this present lyfe, but also for euermore. Amen. There is nothing that we can chalēge and ascribe vnto our selues for our well doinges. It is his gyfte, and cometh of him what so euer we doe wherewith God is pleased.

I beseeche you brethren, suffer the waye of exhortacion: for we haue written vnto you in fewe wordes. Ye knowe our brother Timothe, that he is at Iphorne: with whom (if he come shortly) I wyll se you. Salute them that haue the ouersight of you, & all the sayntes. They of Italy salute you, & eace be with you all. Amen. The text.

These thinges haue I written for your exhortacion, desyryng you to take in good parte that I haue done of a good mynde and purpose. I haue written vnto you in fewe wordes, as he who purposeth shortly to see you. You shal vnderstande that Timothe is not with me at this present. For I haue sent him to an other place. If he recourne shortly I wyll come with him and se you.

Haue me commended to all suche as haue the ouersight of you, and furthermore to the whole compaignie of sayntes & good churlians. The Italians salute you. The grace and fauour of god be with you all. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the Paraphrase vpon the Epistle to the Hebrewes.